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REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

Serving in France, Kem Bennett became an authority on hooch

WHEN Kem Bennett lived in Cornwall, the farmers near his home at Fowey brewed delicious rough cider. "What I couldn't understand," he says, "was why they didn't turn it into hooch." In his story *Applejack For Alexey* (page 22), Bennett corrects the deficiency, but he is still, even now, surprised. "In Brittany, which is so much like Cornwall in its habits and traditions, they turn apples into Calvados, the famous Normandy spirit—and then the drinkers turn rosy red and sour apple-green." Bennett knows. A fluent French speaker, he worked with the Resistance during the war, and when the American Army recaptured Brittany he liberated villages for them. "Sometimes three or four in a morning," he says, "and I had several tumblers of Calvados at each. I'm an authority on that stuff."

He has found one genuine Cornish vice for his story. "They do carry on a little smuggling," he says. "Mostly schnapps in sauce bottles."

Bennett lives in Sussex now, with his wife and two children, in a big square Georgian house at Petworth. His wife, a daughter of Joan Grant, the novelist, helps him "in a gentle sort of way. She's an excellent proof-reader." Bennett, aged thirty-seven, has written six novels, two films and many short stories. At present he is working on a story about motor racing at Le Mans; he is a keen motorist. His other current interest is mycology, the study of fungi, which also absorbs the hero of *Applejack For Alexey*.

IN their sixteen years of married life, Leonard and Iris Moules have never had a home of their own. They have lived at mission stations in the harsh country of the Indian-Tibetan border, where both are missionaries, and have made lecture tours of Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

Now they are on a year's leave in this country, where Leonard Moules has written *My Himalayan Parish*, the story of his adventures, which begins on page 9. Next May they are to return to India, where he is a regional mission chief, with twenty-five other missionaries under him.

Leonard Moules and his wife were both born near London. "We attended the same Sunday school at Chiswick," says Mrs. Moules. "Long before we married we felt called to be missionaries. Leonard went out to India four years before me to get experience, and I joined him later.

"We were miles from 'civilization,' and we lived like the people. Our food was mainly lentils and rice and goat meat. The natives always brought us the meat with the tail still attached and a tuft of hair on the end—to show us it really was goat and not dog or jackal, which some of them ate."

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Free Speech

- **A medal for the unselfish**
- **Saving the tottering churches**
- **Fiddling with nature's food**

REGARDLESS of her personal duties and interests, a seventy-year-old spinster has been the prop and stay of our neighbourhood for many years. She is asked at a moment's notice to baby-sit, cook a meal, nurse the sick, or care for pets. With no demur, she arrives to help and slips off again unobtrusively.

We have many medals for distinguished service in many fields, but not one for the quiet unselfish service to humanity that so often goes unnoticed year after year. I wish the Queen would strike a new decoration —the "Elizabeth Community Service Medal"—to be awarded not so much for the recipient's sake, but to make the immediate community realize the love and help so freely given.—MRS. D. COOPER, Oxclose Lane, Arnold, Nottingham.

Quick Change

One generation is enough for the change over from long hand to shorthand ("Free Speech," July 21). I was living in Turkey when the whole population was ordered by the government to learn to read and write in Latin characters instead of Arabic. Everyone aged from six to sixty worked hard and succeeded.—MOIRA WEBBER, Radcliffe Square, London, S.W.10.

Beside Himself

While on a caravan holiday, I was awakened one morning by a metallic tapping. Thinking that someone was being very industrious, I tried to get to sleep again. When the same thing happened next morning I decided to

complain, and drew back the curtain to investigate. The culprit was a male blackbird vigorously pecking at his reflection in one of the bright hubcaps of my car. Evidently he did not like the look of "the other fellow."—R. F. CARTWRIGHT, Coventry Road, Birmingham, 26.

New Name

Many people nowadays seem to write their second christian name in full, replacing the more common first name by an initial. William G. Smith now signs himself W. Godfrey Smith —the first version is thought to have insufficient tone. What is the reason for this new fashion?—GEORGE WILLIAM MATTHEWS, Wrighton Road, Harrow Weald.

Falling Down

Many cathedrals and churches, centuries old, are riddled with woodworm, and the stonework is crumbling away. In the City of London, many of Wren's churches, destroyed in the blitz, will never be rebuilt, and other churches remain open to the sky ten years after the end of the war. Should not a national trust be set up to attend to all this, or is the task beyond us?—J. W. BIRD, Westcliff Park Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

The upkeep of a church is the responsibility of the parishioners. But provided that a church is of sufficient historical and architectural value, the Historic Churches Preservation Trust will make a grant for repair, whether the church is in full use or not. The Trust relies on public donations: since it began four years ago it has made 650 grants to churches of all denominations, totalling about £250,000.

Clean Up

Whenever I go to the seaside, I buy a bottle of eucalyptus oil to remove tar stains from clothing ("Free Speech," July 21). If the oil is applied within twenty-four hours and before the garment is washed, the tar is completely removed.—MRS. E. H. WILSON, Clifton Place, Wakefield, Yorkshire.

This remedy works well. Alternatively carbon tetrachloride or ether, both obtainable at chemists, can be sponged on with cotton wool. They should preferably be used out of doors because of the fumes.

On Test

For more than twenty years my husband has held a driving licence in the Isle of Man, and has driven regularly. But now that we have come to live in England he has only been granted a provisional driving licence. This means that he cannot drive without a qualified driver beside him until he passes the test. If the holder of an English licence can obtain a licence in the Isle of Man, shouldn't this arrangement work the other way?—MRS. E. CANIPA, Clifton Street, Wigan, Lancashire.

"Although there are reciprocal arrangements for holiday driving," says the Ministry of Transport, "anyone from abroad—which includes Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man—must conform to our laws if he is living here permanently. If he wants a full licence, he must pass a road test."

Gilding The Orange

When are suppliers going to stop messing about with our food, and let us have the produce as nature intended? In our town, with about twelve thousand inhabitants, I know of only three bakers where it is possible to buy a one hundred per cent wholemeal loaf.

The latest absurdity was when I bought some oranges. They were large, juicy and sweet, but of a hideous colour and stamped "Colour added." Why is it necessary to add colour to an orange?—MRS. HAZEL WHITELEY, Baildon, Yorkshire.

"There is nothing new in this," says an orange importer. "In some near-tropical countries, oranges ripen while the peel is still partly green. The public would not buy them in that condition, so a harmless colouring is added. At the same time the fruit is waxed so that if one turns bad the whole crate is not affected."

Nuts To The Bride

The sugared almonds distributed after Italian weddings ("Free Speech," July 21), are called "confetti." I was staying with friends in Italy when a small box arrived. "Do you have confetti in England?" asked my Italian host. I replied that we threw it at the bride. "How cruel!" he remarked, and then opened the box to show me the sugared almonds, and explained the name.—R. H. ASPDEN, Torrisholme Road, Lancaster.

. . . Catullus of Verona wrote two thousand years ago of nuts being thrown to slaves at Roman marriages. Originally they were thrown over the bride, as they still are in Greece and sometimes in Scotland. We English are more cautious with our rice.—P. W. F. BROWN, King Henry's Road, London, N.W.3.

Fine Art

I searched the shelves of our local library in vain recently for a book on baby care. Then I found several—in a section headed "Useful Hobbies."—MRS. E. HILL, Brickwood Road, Croydon.

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

FATHER has his hands full this morning . . . and his loose change is about three layers down. So this flirtation with automation is doomed. Lack of a handy sixpence makes that slot machine about as useful as a bucket and spade on platform four. But Father's unlikely to explain such technicalities to his sweet-toothed youngsters. This, says Wood, is Mother's department. She'd better whisk those children away before chocolate becomes the straw that breaks the camel's back—or buy the beast of burden a sympathetic packet of cigarettes.

If you can brush after meals, that's best—if not, here's

NEWS! A toothpaste for people who can't brush after every meal-

Picnicking on Hog's Back, Surrey

JUST ONE BRUSHING removes most bacteria—major cause of decay and mouth odour

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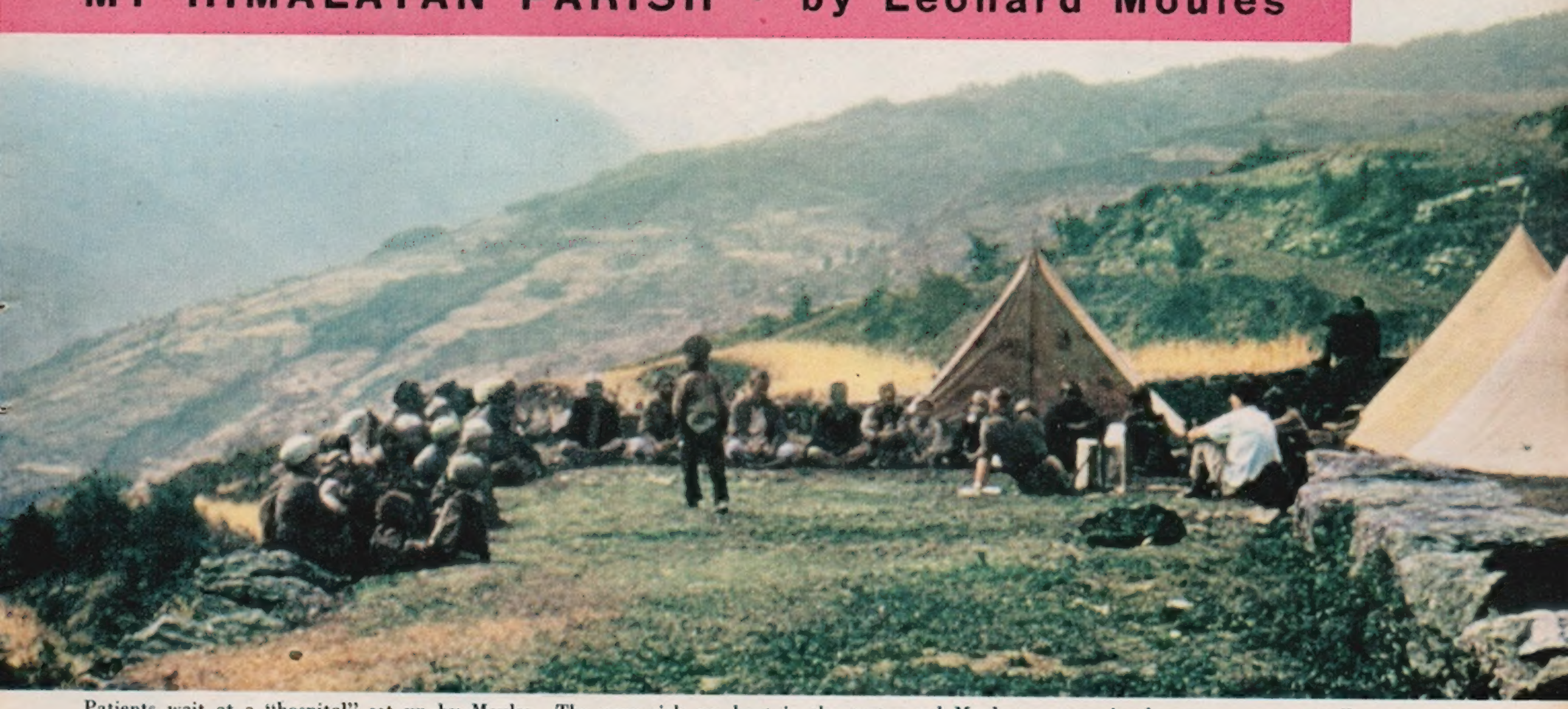

Patients wait at a "hospital" set up by Moules. The very sick are kept in the tents, and Moules operates in the open . . . on a wall

I brave danger three miles high

This was my task: to live among the colourful tribes on the border of forbidden Tibet—in mountains where every move could bring peril

Bhotya women wear baggy clothes and have enormous gold rings through their noses

Marlin Summers and Tibetan visitors. He and Moules opened an "inn" for traders

ALTHOUGH it was a thousand feet above, it seemed an easy stroll to the pass. Confidently I began to climb the steep slopes, made slippery with light snow whipped by the icy Himalayan wind. Forty yards on, my legs felt like lead. Breath came painfully, and my heart pounded like a trip-hammer. Now the pass seemed to be miles away, inaccessible. I sank my head on the handle of my ice-axe.

Far below, five black specks came slowly into view. They were the three yaks that carried our baggage, and their two Bhotya drovers. With Jac Dyck, my Canadian colleague, who now toiled two hundred feet below me, I had laughed at the persistent one mile an hour covered by the yaks. Now, as we neared the 17,000-foot crest of the Unta Dura Pass, close to the border of Tibet, the yaks were rapidly overtaking us. In this rarefied air, one mile an hour was beyond our capacity.

Breathing became easier and I moved off again. I determined to cover thirty yards each time before resting, but often the distance was nearer twenty. Five hundred feet from the top I was struggling through agonizing ten-yard walks; but at last I reached the summit.

I sank down by a heap of stones covered with coloured bunting, offerings to the spirit of the mountain left there by Tibetans and Bhotyas the year before. Jac Dyck dropped beside me a few minutes later.

We sat on the roof of the world, three miles high in the Himalayas, in the United Provinces of Northern India. Tibet, the forbidden land, stretched away to the north-east. Forbidden or not, Tibet was my target.

My job, as director of mission work in the Himalayas for the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, was to infiltrate the Christian message into that country, the isolated stronghold of Buddhism. It was a long, slow task I had been set, a task that could be accomplished only by an indirect attack. Now at the

Leonard Moules and his companions set up this camp at 16,000 feet. When they lost the trail they wandered over landslides and near precipices

Moules (left) and Jac Dyck climbed high in the Himalayas to open a mission station in the Niti Valley. Ten thousand Bhotyas gather there each summer for trade with the Tibetans

beginning of June, 1947, I was on a seven-day trek through the world's highest mountains to open a new base of operations.

As we rested, the two drovers came steadily nearer with the three yaks. The men, whom we had descriptively named Useless Eustace and Smiler, were acclimatized and did not share our trouble in breathing the thin air of the mountains.

Smiler, smiling as usual, walked past us and made for a snow-covered crest.

I shouted: "Smiler, stop!" He turned puzzled. I went after him and pulled him back from the crest.

We moved to the side until we could see that the crest was made only of snow, a huge frozen wave overhanging twenty feet out from the rock face. If Smiler had walked out on the crest, he would have crashed through into a hundred-foot fall. The odd thing is that I had never seen such a cornice of snow before; but my boyhood was spent poring over books on the Himalayas, and something I had read of cornices clicked in my mind as Smiler stepped so cheerfully towards danger.

THE four of us walked over the highest point of the pass—a saddle in the mountain range—and looked down on the valley. Smiler, for once, stopped smiling.

"I have seen nothing like this for twenty years," he moaned.

All was unbroken snow, as if smoothed with a giant's trowel. Somewhere, only a few feet below that sea of snow, lay the ridge that carried our path to the bottom of the valley. On each side of the invisible ridge the snow lay in fifty-foot drifts. To the four men, there was nothing to show which was path and which was drift.

I looked around our small party. Jac and I had little experience of high mountaineering. Smiler, with all his experience, was plainly horrified at what lay before us. Useless Eustace, sweetly peaceful in his ignorance, was as placid as ever.

Only one member of the party could be trusted to lead us down the trail to the next valley. Joe, the most thrusting of the yaks, had only one horn; he used it so well in fights that we named him after Joe Louis. It took three men to load Joe. First they had to tie him to a boulder. Then one of the men had to hold his back leg clear of the ground in a noose. Thus immobilized, Joe would consent to have the load tied on his back.

We pushed Joe ahead into the sea of snow. The other yaks followed, and the men followed the yaks. Unerringly, probably by smelling the ground where the snow was shallowest, Joe began to pick his way along the trail.

A few weeks later hundreds of Tibetans and Bhotyas—inhabitants of Northern India, of Tibetan origin—would be travelling over these passes during their annual trading season, which extends from the end of June to October. We were first over, breaking the trail, because we wanted to be in the Niti Valley in time to meet the traders from Tibet when they arrived.

Since I first came to the Himalayas, a raw twenty-three year old, in 1936, I had moved up the Milam Valley from the Mission House at Lohaghat each peacetime year. At Milam I had a mission station where I met the 15,000 Bhotyas who lived in the valley in the trading season, the only time of the year when it was possible for men to live at such altitudes.

Now, in 1947, I had decided to move on from Milam to open a second mission station in the neighbouring Niti Valley, where ten thousand Bhotyas gathered annually to meet Tibetans coming in by different trade routes.

Jac Dyck, leader of the neighbouring World Evangelization Crusade district on the Nepal border, came over to help me with the trek through the mountains.

So it was that we came to be floundering along the borders of a land forbidden to Christian Europeans, with our lives dependent on the sure-footedness of a one-horned, bad-tempered yak.

I watched each of Joe's footfalls, fascinated; every step found hard ground below.

Still moving at their steady one mile an hour, the yaks and their drovers forged their way down into the valley. Floundering in the soft snow, Jac and I had a hard job to catch them. We did so when they reached the grassy floor of the valley below the snow line.

We pitched our tents and unrolled our bedding. We had not eaten for ten hours, but we lay inert for an hour before we felt able to collect wood for a fire and cook food. As we ate, I noticed that the eyes of the drovers were red and swollen. Unlike Jac and I, they did not wear goggles in the sun-glazed snow. I dissolved a morphine tablet in a little water, and used the solution as eye drops.

It relieved their pain enough to let them sleep. But next morning, when they awoke, they were snowblind.

OVER breakfast, we decided that I should scout ahead with map and compass and Jac would come behind with the yaks. When we were ready to start, I took hold of Smiler and Jac grabbed Eustace. We placed them each behind a yak and gave them a tail to hold. All day long they stumbled and moaned behind the yaks. At first we sympathized with their cries of "Sahib, I can't see," but later we grew hardened to their plight. That day we could see dangers where they could see none. We drove on without mercy.

Our route lay through a gorge, a two thousand foot cleft in the mountain. A mile

Even when lounging among friends, the Bhotya men are always spinning wool on bobbins which they carry with them. Their wives do the weaving and dyeing

Bhotya dancers leave a village. When the blade flew off one dancer's sword it struck a man in the neck. Moules spent half an hour putting in stitches

along the path we were stopped by a web of rock, sixty feet high, that almost cut off the gorge.

Smiler could have helped, but he was blind. I was baffled; then, for the second time on this trek, a book I had read came to my aid. I remembered seeing a photograph of this unusual web of rock in a book written about this area. Though disguised now by snow, this was unmistakably the same piece of rock. And I remembered that the trail led across the web.

On the other side of the web a sloping wall of snow led to a narrow ledge on the far side of the gorge. I cut my way up, found the path, and waved to Jac. But the yaks refused to tackle the slope, and Joe rushed back up the rocky web. Jac sprinted to cut him off, and gave Joe a blow that splintered the handle of his ice-axe on the single horn.

We finally got the yaks past the narrow ledge. Then, half a mile along the boulder-strewn valley, my navigation broke down. A gully entered the valley from the north. It could be our way out. I called to Smiler.

"Sahib, I can't see," he replied.

I lost my temper. I rolled a large snowball and hurled it at the back of his neck. Bewildered, he sat down. Having thus shocked him into awareness of the bigger problem of general survival, I explained the situation in simple terms. He agreed that the trail lay down the gully. Soon we were tackling a steep snow slope that led to the 16,000-foot Kungr Pass.

Again, the distance we travelled between each rest grew less and less. Joe strode off, followed by one of the other yaks. The third yak made bad time, owing to the fact that, either accidentally or for companionship, Smiler and Eustace were trudging behind the one tail.

Joyful relief came to us at the summit. Three miles away the snowline ended in the green slopes and azure lakes of the next valley. The snow sloped away gently for the first three hundred feet. I hit the snow-face with my ice-axe. It showed little tendency to avalanche, so I sat and slid down the slope. Jac slid down after me, and the yaks brought the drovers down in the gully we made. We pitched our tents on purple heather, and decided on a twenty-four hour rest.

Our path now lay across the trade routes from Tibet, parallel to the Tibetan border, barely two miles away. Smiler, now recovering from his blindness, suddenly gave a shout. He had spotted another camp below ours. We walked over.

Dyan Singh smuggled Bibles into Tibet for Moules. The last load was held up for three weeks—as "propaganda"

Five Tibetans sat round a fire. Close to them sat a huge dog. Long-haired sheep grazed nearby. These I knew to be the pack-animals of the Tibetan traders. Each sheep carries two saddle-bags containing fifteen pounds of trading material: salt, borax, musk, gold, jade, turquoise, or yaks' tails which are used for wafting flies from the presence of high personages. These are the exports of Tibet, bartered in exchange for barley and rice.

The leader of the party stood up to greet us. He wore his black hair in two long, matted plaits. Turquoise pendants hung from his ears. Only his left arm was in the sleeve of his heavy sheepskin coat. The right sleeve was brought underneath his arm and tucked into his belt. In spite of the intense cold, the Tibetan traveller prefers to have his right arm bare and free for action. His brown, ankle-length skirt was tucked up to reveal his picturesque knee-boots of embroidered red cloth, with yak-leather soles. The superfluous cloth of his skirt hung in a pouch from his belt. In this pouch the traders carry a drinking cup, knife, needle and thread for emergency repairs to saddle-bags, and bits of rope for repairing harnesses.

He greeted us in the Tibetan way by putting out his tongue and extending it as far as he could down towards his chin. He spoke Hindi, and we talked while sipping Tibetan tea. This is made from tea, peppers, spices, rancid butter and boiling water, churned in a wooden cylinder with a perforated piston. Jac refused tea, but I had learned to like it. It warms a man through to his fingertips, and tastes rather like chicken soup.

The Tibetan, I learned, was a Sarji, or trade agent from Lhasa, the capital city of Tibet. He was heading for Milam, which we had left three days earlier, and where he arrives about June 21 each year. It was then June 19.

ALONG each of the trade routes into India, the Sarjis are the first to break the snow of the passes leading from Tibet. When a Sarji meets the Bhotya traders they join over the inevitable cup of tea and discuss trade conditions in their two countries. The Sarji interviews leaders of the Indian traders, questioning them closely about epidemics among men or animals.

The year before, at Milam, I watched the climax of these interviews. The head man of the Bhotyas, after denying the presence of any diseases, searched around and picked up a stone, which he offered to the Tibetan agent. The Sarji rejected it, and pointed to a larger stone. The Bhotya demurred. Finally they found a stone of an agreed size, and the Sarji kept it. Each side knew that if any infectious diseases were introduced into Tibet along the Milam trade route that year, the Indian traders would be fined in gold equal to the weight of the stone.

The traders use stones in other ways to strike bargains. When the Sarji has gone back, and the Bhotya caravans leave for the Tibetan trading grounds, a young Bhotya is chosen to press on ahead. With a few companions, uncluttered by pack animals, this outrider quickly reaches Gyanima, the trading ground for Milam and two other valleys. There he meets an outrider from the Tibetan side.

They haggle, and finally agree on their terms of trade. Then they break a stone cleanly into

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This was the day . . . the day for a murder according to Mrs. Oliver's grim foreboding. And Hercule Poirot was at the scene of the crime—waiting for it to happen

DEAD MAN'S FOLLY

by AGATHA CHRISTIE

MRS. ARIADNE OLIVER knew all about murders in books—she had written a shelf of detective novels. But when she suspected that a real murder was going to occur, she became very perturbed indeed. . . .

A fête was to be held in the grounds of Nasse House, the Devonshire home of Sir George Stubbs and his Creole wife, Hattie. A Murder Hunt had been planned as a novelty, by Mrs. Oliver—called in for the purpose.

A weird sense of foreboding caused her to send for her old friend Hercule Poirot, ostensibly to present the Murder Hunt prizes. "Call me a fool if you like," she told him, "but I can only say that if there was a real murder tomorrow instead of a fake one, I shouldn't be surprised."

Discreetly, Poirot studied the people at Nasse. There was Sir George himself; Lady Stubbs, exotically beautiful but simple-minded—or was she?

And Michael Weyman, the young architect who was repairing the Folly in the grounds, and who seemed unduly interested in Lady Stubbs.

There was Amanda Brewis, the formidable secretary who obviously disliked Lady Stubbs; and old Mrs. Folliat, a widow who now lived at the lodge. Her family had owned Nasse for years, so she might have grounds for resenting the *nouveau riche* Sir George's possession—though she did not seem to do so.

There were obviously tensions among these people, but Poirot found it hard to believe that any of them were planning murder. And yet—and yet he had to agree with Mrs. Oliver: there was something at Nasse that was very, very wrong. . . .

"Oh!" Hattie exclaimed. "It's from Etienne—my cousin Etienne. He's coming here . . . in a yacht"

PART TWO

Preparations For A Murder

HERCULE POIROT made a meticulous toilet, applying a scented pomade to his moustaches and twirling them to a ferocious couple of points. He stood back from the mirror and was satisfied by what he saw.

The sound of a gong resounded through the house, and he descended the stairs.

The butler, having finished a most artistic performance, *crescendo, forte, diminuendo, rallentando,* was just replacing the gong stick on its hook. His dark, melancholy face showed pleasure.

Poirot recalled the plot Mrs. Oliver had written for the Murder Hunt, which involved "a blackmailing letter from the housekeeper—or it may be the butler. . . ." This butler looked as though blackmailing letters would be well within his scope. Poirot wondered if Mrs. Oliver took her characters from life.

Miss Brewis crossed the hall in an unbecoming flowered chiffon dress and he caught up with her, asking as he did so: "You have a housekeeper here?"

"Oh, no, Monsieur Poirot. I'm afraid one doesn't run to niceties of that kind nowadays, except in a really large establishment, of course. Oh, no, I'm the housekeeper—more housekeeper than secretary, sometimes, in this house." She gave a short acid laugh.

Poirot considered her thoughtfully. He could not see Miss Brewis writing a blackmailing letter. Now, an anonymous letter—that would be a different thing. He had known anonymous letters written by women not unlike Miss Brewis—solid, dependable women, totally unsuspected by those around them.

"What is your butler's name?" he asked.

"Hendon." Miss Brewis looked a little astonished.

Poirot recollected himself and explained quickly: "I ask because I had a fancy I had seen him somewhere before."

"Very likely," said Miss Brewis. "None of these people ever seems to stay in any place more than four months. They must soon have done the round of all the available situations in England. After all, it's not many people who can afford butlers and cooks nowadays."

They came into the drawing-room, where Sir George, looking somehow rather unnatural in a dinner jacket, was proffering sherry. Mrs. Oliver, in iron-grey satin, was looking like an obsolete battleship, and Lady Stubbs's smooth black head was bent down as she studied *Vogue*.

ALEC and Peggy Legge—a young married couple who had taken a cottage by the river—were staying to dinner, and also Jim Warburton, agent to Masterton, the local M.P.

"We've a heavy evening ahead of us," Warburton warned them. "No bridge tonight. All hands to the pump. There are any amount of notices to print, and the big card for the fortune telling. What name shall we have? Madame Zuleika? Esmeralda? Or Romany Leigh, the Gipsy Queen?"

"The Eastern touch," said Peggy. "Everyone in agricultural districts hates gipsies. Zuleika sounds all right. I brought my paint box over and I thought Michael could do us a curling snake to ornament the notice."

"Cleopatra rather than Zuleika, then?"

Hendon appeared at the door. "Dinner is served, my lady."

They went in. There were candles on the long table. The room was full of shadows. Warburton and Alec Legge sat on either side of their hostess. Poirot was between Mrs. Oliver and Miss Brewis. The latter was engaged in brisk general conversation about further details of preparation for tomorrow.

Mrs. Oliver sat in brooding abstraction and hardly spoke. When she did at last break her silence, it was with a somewhat contradictory explanation. "Don't bother about me," she said to Poirot. "I'm just remembering if there's anything I've forgotten."

Sir George laughed heartily. "The fatal flaw, eh?" he remarked.

"That's just it," said Mrs. Oliver. "There always is one. Sometimes one doesn't realize it until a book's actually in print. And then it's

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

agony." Her face reflected this emotion. She sighed. The curious thing is that most people never notice it. I say to myself: 'But of course the cook would have been bound to notice that two cutlets hadn't been eaten.' But nobody else thinks of it at all."

"You fascinate me." Michael Weyman leaned across the table. "The Mystery of the Second Cutlet. Please, please never explain. I shall wonder about it in my bath."

Mrs. Oliver gave him an abstracted smile, and relapsed into her preoccupations. Lady Stubbs was also silent. Now and again she yawned. Warburton, Alec Legge and Miss Brewis talked across her.

As they came out of the dining-room, Lady Stubbs stopped by the stairs. "I'm going to bed," she announced. "I'm very sleepy."

"Oh, Lady Stubbs," exclaimed Miss Brewis, "there's so much to be done. We've been counting on you to help us."

"Yes, I know," said Lady Stubbs. "But I'm going to bed." She spoke with the satisfaction of a small child.

She turned her head as Sir George came out of the dining-room. "I'm tired, George. I'm going to bed. You don't mind?"

He came up to her and patted her on the shoulder affectionately. "You go and get your beauty sleep, Hattie. Be fresh for tomorrow."

He kissed her lightly and she went up the stairs, waving her hand and calling out: "Good night all!"

Sir George smiled up at her. Miss Brewis drew in her breath sharply and turned brusquely away. "Come along, everybody," she said with a forced cheerfulness that did not ring true. "We've got to *work*."

Presently everyone was set to their tasks. Since Miss Brewis could not be everywhere at once, there were soon some defaulters. Michael Weyman ornamented a placard with a ferociously magnificent serpent and the words: *MADAME ZULEIKA Will Tell Your Fortune*, and then vanished unobtrusively. Alec Legge did a few nondescript chores and then went out avowedly to measure for the Hoop-la and did not reappear. The women, as women do, worked energetically and conscientiously.

Hercule Poirot followed his hostess's example and went early to bed.

He came down to breakfast on the following morning at nine-thirty. Breakfast was served in pre-war fashion; a row of hot dishes on an electric heater.

Sir George was eating a full-sized Englishman's breakfast of scrambled eggs, bacon and kidneys. Mrs. Oliver and Miss Brewis had a modified version of the same. Michael Weyman was eating a plateful of cold ham. Only Lady Stubbs was unheedful of the fleshpots and was nibbling thin toast and sipping black coffee. She was wearing a large pale pink hat which looked odd at the breakfast table.

THE post had just arrived. Miss Brewis had an enormous pile of letters in front of her which she was rapidly sorting into piles. Any of Sir George's marked Personal she passed over to him. The others she opened herself.

Lady Stubbs had three letters. She opened what were clearly a couple of bills and tossed them aside. Then she opened the third letter and said suddenly and clearly: "Oh!"

The exclamation was so startled that all heads turned towards her.

"It's from Etienne," she said. "My cousin Etienne. He's coming here . . . in a yacht."

"Let's see, Hattie." Sir George held out his hand. She passed the letter down the table. He smoothed out the sheet and read.

"Who's this Etienne de Sousa? A cousin, you say?"

"I think so. A second cousin. I do not remember him very well. He was——"

"Yes, my dear?"

Lady Stubbs shrugged her shoulders. "It does

Poirot paused and hazarded a guess. "Are you, perhaps, the cousin of Lady Stubbs?"

not matter. It is all a long time ago. I was a little girl."

"I suppose you wouldn't remember him very well. But we must make him welcome, of course," said Sir George heartily. "Pity in a way it's the fête today, but we'll ask him to dinner. Perhaps we could put him up for a night or two—show him something of the country?" Sir George was being the hearty country squire.

Lady Stubbs said nothing. She stared down into her coffee cup.

Conversation on the inevitable subject of the fête became general. Only Poirot remained detached, watching the slim, exotic figure at the head of the table. He wondered just what was going on in her mind.

At that very moment her eyes came up and cast a swift glance along the table to where he sat. It was a look so shrewd and appraising that he was startled. As their eyes met, the shrewd expression vanished—emptiness returned. But that other look had been there, cold, calculating, watchful. . . .

Or had he imagined it? In any case, wasn't it true that people who were slightly mentally deficient very often had a kind of sly native cunning that sometimes surprised even the people who knew them best?

He thought to himself that Lady Stubbs was certainly an enigma. People seemed to hold diametrically opposite ideas concerning her. Miss Brewis had intimated that Lady Stubbs knew very well what she was doing; yet Mrs. Oliver definitely thought her half-witted, and Mrs. Folliat, who had known her long and intimately, had spoken of her as someone not quite normal, who needed care and watchfulness.

Miss Brewis was probably prejudiced. She disliked Lady Stubbs for her indolence and her aloofness.

Poirot wondered if Miss Brewis had been Sir George's secretary prior to his marriage. If so, she might easily resent the coming of the new régime.

Poirot himself would have agreed wholeheartedly with Mrs. Folliat and Mrs. Oliver—until this morning. And, after all, could he really rely on what had been only a fleeting impression?

Lady Stubbs got up abruptly from the table. "I have a headache," she said. "I shall go and lie down in my room."

Sir George sprang up anxiously. "My dear girl. You're all right, aren't you? You'll be fit enough for this afternoon?"

"Yes—I think so. It's just a headache."

"Take some aspirin, Lady Stubbs," said Miss Brewis briskly. "Have you got some or shall I bring it to you?"

"I've got some."

She moved towards the door. As she went she dropped the handkerchief she had been squeezing between her fingers. Poirot, moving quietly forward, picked it up unobtrusively.

Sir George, about to follow his wife, was stopped by Miss Brewis. "About the parking of cars this afternoon, Sir George. I'm just going to give Mitchell instructions. Do you think that the best plan would be. . . ?"

Poirot, going out of the room, heard no more. He caught up with his hostess on the stairs. "Madame, you dropped this." He proffered the handkerchief with a bow.

She took it unheedingly. "Did I? Thank you."

"I am most distressed, madame, that you should be suffering. Particularly when your cousin is coming."

She answered quickly, almost violently: "I don't want to see Etienne. I don't like him. He's bad. He was always bad. I'm afraid of him. He does bad things."

The door of the dining-room opened and Sir George came across the hall and up the stairs. "Hattie, my poor darling! Let me come and tuck you up."

They went up the stairs together, his arm round her tenderly, his face worried and absorbed. Poirot looked up after them, then turned to encounter Miss Brewis, moving fast and clasping papers. "Lady Stubbs's headache——" he began.

"No more headache than my foot!" said Miss Brewis crossly, and disappeared into her office closing the door behind her.

Poirot sighed and went out through the front door on to the terrace. Mrs. Masterton had just driven up in a small car and was directing the elevation of a tea marquee, baying out orders in rich, full-blooded tones.

She turned to greet Poirot. "Such a nuisance, these affairs!" she observed. "And they will always put everything in the wrong place. No, Rogers! More to the left—*left*—not right! What do you think of the weather, Monsieur Poirot? Looks doubtful to me. Rain, of course, would spoil everything. And we've had such a fine summer this year for a change. Where's Sir George? I want to talk to him about car parking."

"His wife has a headache and has gone to lie down."

"She'll be all right this afternoon," said Mrs. Masterton, confidently. "Likes functions, you know. She'll make a terrific toilet and be pleased about it as a child. Just fetch me a bundle of

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Poirot knelt beside the figure on the floor. A muffled exclamation escaped from his lips

Men and women are still being tricked or kidnapped into slavery. In Arabia, the booming oil industry is increasing the demand—and the prices. Even children may be . . .

SOLD AS SLAVES —IN 1956

by C. W. W. Greenidge

WHEN an African chieftain who was a Moslem made the pilgrimage to Mecca from his home in French West Africa a few years ago, he took with him six servants.

The group crossed the Sahara on foot, reaching the Red Sea about a year later. They sailed to Jeddah, the main port of Saudi Arabia, and from there went on to Mecca. There the chieftain bought a house and settled down. Two years later, one of the six servants, a man called Awad, was sold into slavery.

He escaped and, for the second time, but now alone, crossed the Sahara. He reached his home where he told his story to Emmanuel La Gravière, a Protestant Minister who had been sent to Africa by the French Parliament to investigate slave traffic between Africa and Arabia.

One morning, said Awad, his master told him that he was to be placed in the service of an Arabian prince. Bewildered, he was taken to a group of buildings, which he later learned was the Jeddah slave market.

"I was pushed into a long, dark room where masses of men and women were awaiting their fate," he said. "From time to time, other men came into the room and silently examined us." As in almost all slave markets, the sales were by auction.

Eventually, Awad found himself in the service of a large household—and realized that he was a slave, one of about forty owned by his new master.

They were all well treated—so long as they were obedient. But Awad was made to look on while one slave, who had escaped and had been recaptured, was beaten almost to death.

After two years, in May, 1953, Awad himself escaped and made his way to Jeddah, where he stowed away on a ship bound for Port Sudan, on the African side of the Red Sea. There, he got ashore unnoticed and walked across Africa to his home in Bamako.

This story may sound incredible to those who think that slavery was long since abolished. It didn't surprise me. My work is the constant sifting of the evidence of slavery, and most of it comes from people who have seen the slave trade in operation. I spoke to Monsieur La Gravière when he was in London last month.

What happened to Awad happens to a great many Africans each year. The only difference is that he escaped to tell the tale. It is a common practice for Moslem pilgrims to Mecca to take their servants with them and sell them into slavery on arrival. They are, in effect, using them as 'living travellers' cheques,' and at least four slave markets are maintained in Saudi Arabia to make it easy for them—at Jeddah, at Mecca, at Taif and at Riyadh.

The booming oil industry of Arabia has pushed up the prices paid for slaves, and the trade has increased as a result.

Charles Wilton Wood Greenidge was a member of the United Nations committee on slavery. This week he is attending a Geneva meeting at which the U.N. is expected to ratify a new "Slavery Convention." It is based largely on a scheme drafted by Britain's Anti-Slavery Society, of which Greenidge is Director

In 1951, a friend of mine was one of a party who made a car journey through France and Spain and along the coast of North Africa. They crossed the Red Sea to Jeddah but could not get permission to enter the country and they were not allowed to go beyond the end of the pier.

While they were there, however, he talked with some Americans employed by a company operating in Jeddah, and they told him that the prices for slaves ranged from £10 to £70.

Since then there has been a startling rise. Not long ago, the French ambassador in Saudi Arabia, in a report to his government, gave the price of an able-bodied man as £150. An ageing woman can be bought for £40, but an attractive girl fetches £400. The girls are bought as concubines.

A good many of them are sold when they are very young. Last year, Major W. O. Little, who had commanded the Oman Levies in the Buraimi Oasis, told me that while the Saudi Arabians were in control of the area there was an extensive traffic in child slaves.

The people of the Oasis area were so poor that they were easily persuaded to sell some of their children as slaves, nearly always girl children and usually about eight years old. The Oasis area became a thriving slave market, and children were brought to it from distant parts of Inner Oman. When the Saudi Arabians retreated and Major Little took over control, he expelled fifteen Oman citizens who had been trafficking in slaves.

Arabia is now the only region in the world where slavery is legal. It is banned in the British colony of Aden, and the three small states on the Persian Gulf, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar, all abolished it by law between 1937 and 1952. But it continues in Oman, which is a sultanate under the military protection of Britain, and in the Yemen.

Disturbing reports have appeared from time to time, mainly in the French press, about an organized slave traffic between Africa and Arabia. Details have been given of the raiding of African villages on the southern borders of the Sahara desert and of caravans of captives being marched across the Sahara, linked together with chains, to a port on the African side of the Red Sea. From there the survivors are transported in small craft to Arabia and there sold into slavery. Many die on the way of hunger, thirst and exhaustion.

The French ambassador in Saudi Arabia informed his government that slave traders in Saudi Arabia send African emissaries back to Africa to recruit slaves. These emissaries pose as Moslem missionaries and urge African Moslems to accompany them on pilgrimages to Mecca.

MANY Africans fall into the trap. When they arrive in Saudi Arabia they are arrested by the government on the ground that they have entered the country illegally, and are put in prison. They are later released and handed over to slave traders, who sell them. The ambassador estimated the number so dealt with at a few hundred a year. And he gave the names and addresses of ten slave traders engaged in this traffic.

Reliable information has reached the Anti-Slavery Society that slaves are also reaching Saudi Arabia from Iraq, Persia, Baluchistan and Oman.

In September, 1955, the newspapers of Iraq reported that the Iraqi police had caught a slave trader who had been supplying under-age girls to highly placed persons in Saudi Arabia for several years. When caught he had more than fifty human beings in his possession whom he

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...and now there's

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THE WILD ONE

by NORAH BURKE

Man versus the jungle . . . and there could be only one ending. The wilds had found a worthy champion

WHEN they were pushing the railway up to Runital, they met an elephant who objected. This was in 1909, but the story has never been forgotten, and never will be. As a matter of fact, it has only just now been completed.

Runital, you remember, is a settlement on a lake in the lower part of the Himalayas—on a map of India, in the middle at the top. It isn't high enough up ever to have become a fashionable hill station in the days of the British Raj; but, as it's cooler than the plains, it was used by people who could not afford to send their families away to a real hill station from places like Bareilly; and by those who could not leave their work for long but wanted a short break from the heat.

March to September, although Runi isn't high, sweet-scented breezes blow instead of the tainted oven-breaths of the plains; but to get there, at that time, virgin jungle had to be crossed; the fever-belt of the Terai and Bhabar.

In the early part of the century, Runital was served by a road of sorts—a bridle-track really, which was known in the plains around about as the Bridal

There was one path to safety—if Edward could run fast enough. . . . He fled down the line

Path, because Runi was a favourite spot for honeymoons, especially among railway people. The pay of junior officials was not large and, by the time the girl had come out from England, they could not afford very much else.

The journey up to Runi used to be made by tonga, travellers arriving dusty and bumped, their nerves on edge from squeaking wheels; so there was a good deal of local interest when it was known that a branch line was to be run through, and a decent hotel built instead of the glorified dak bungalow which was all that was available then.

Some didn't like the idea, of course, because of the disturbance to wild life, and the opening up of a haven to commerce; but others welcomed development.

Among those whom the project affected was Edward Humphrey George Bourton-Jones, of the railway; rather a nice young chap but, so far as position went, entirely insignificant. It also affected Dolly Mills of Bedford, because these two were hoping one day to be able to get married. Promotion—quite a small one—would make this possible. . . .

Plans were approved and a start made. The proposed line had to be cut through jungle, take a river or two in its stride, climb a bit, and so arrive at Runital.

"This railway is man versus the jungle," Edward wrote to Dolly. "Rather romantic, I suppose, when you come to think of it. How many years did these trees stand in the forest, that now we are going to use for sleepers? There are heaps of them, seasoning in the timber yards, and I sometimes wonder if you and I will travel over any of them on our honeymoon. Oh, darling . . . !"

The new line was pushing on fast, and there was a good chance that he and Dolly might really travel up to Runi on it one day.

But then the forest answered. It chose a champion and sent him to stop the invaders.

The choice was a solitary bull elephant, a tusker, who did not like human beings and was most anxious to kneel on one, or tread him out flat, or kick him about like a football among his great legs till he died.

The Patair Doon elephant, as he came to be called, because of the valley where he was most often seen, probably did not know why he disliked men. Certainly he can have had no idea that he was defending a kingdom which had been given to him in the beginning of the world.

But so it was. This was his, and he and his sons and grandsons would never again know their thousand miles of green peace if their land were thus split in two. Wild elephants need long stretches of undisturbed jungle to live in. The first cut into them by mankind always widens, and the initial step towards extinction of a species is disconnected distribution. Divide and conquer.

IN this tusker all the wild places of the world were speaking in one voice against the ruin that follows everywhere in the footsteps of man.

One morning young Edward was sent rattling up the line in a trolley to the place where work was then going on. When he drew up, sparks were flying from pickaxe on flint, and the air glittered with rock dust. There was the whine of a saw, and the crash of big trees.

Railways were Edward's delight as well as his livelihood, so when he jumped down among all the raw earth and cut wood, when loose stones crunched underfoot as he walked, he felt pride and excitement. Look at the shining rails behind them, and the forest ahead. . . .

Up to that moment the new line had had a peaceful history; but now, suddenly, men burst out of the jungle where they had been trimming the felled trees so the timber could be dragged away, and came running back towards the rest.

"What is it?" Edward shouted.

"An elephant!"

The coolies round Edward scattered, and next moment a wild tusker came out of the heavy jungle ahead at a fast stride.

He was obviously angry, not charging yet, but looking about for a victim, and every now and then he let out a threatening squeal. The huge head rocked with his journeying, and he was swinging his trunk like a whip as he came up the slope at a purposeful run on to the line, where he caught sight of the trolley.

K-krump! went his head against it, and the impact sent the truck rollicking backwards along the lines, followed by the elephant, who attacked again. This time the little carriage lifted, balanced a moment on one wheel, then sank over on its side. The tusker leaned to gore it but it resisted him and he rose, bleeding.

In the meantime the coolies, seeing that the animal's rage was directed against the trolley instead of themselves, had appeared at the edge of the jungle to watch. So now, when he wheeled, he saw them and charged.

THEY broke and ran, but one, impeded by the others and, as Edward found afterwards, by an injured foot, was not travelling fast enough to escape. In a moment it was plain that this man would be caught by the mountain of grey flesh that was thundering in his wake.

Edward sprinted towards them. "Hey you!" he called angrily. A shout or two—a few stones hurled at the tusker, and Edward transferred its attention from the coolie to himself.

The only clear place to run fast enough to draw the animal away and then escape was on the lines. For a time the elephant lumbered after Edward, while the coolie vanished. Then, troubled by the sharp flints underfoot, it drew up and went back to root up sleepers that weren't yet fixed, to destroy wheelbarrows, and finally to return to the jungle.

Edward also came back—to gaze at the elephant tracks.

They were enormous. Then he remembered something he had been told. He measured the circumference of the forefoot, doubled it and thus got the height at the shoulder. He whistled. The tusker was over ten feet.

That was the first bit of trouble they had with the elephant, but it was not the last. The animal took to haunting the Patair Doon, and chased everyone he saw. Elephants are intolerant of sun and prefer deep shade, but even in the middle of the day this one could often be seen in the thin jungle alongside the rails apparently keeping an eye on them.

His sight was only fair, but his sense of smell was extraordinary, and those who observed him saw that his trunk played constantly to and fro to pick up scent, and that his large ears were always waving to catch the least sound.

It became a battle between him and the railway—between mankind and the wild. Reporters even came up from Calcutta and Bombay to get the story. Those were still the early days of photography, and one man, who set up his tripod and plunged in under the black cloth to focus his camera, could not make out why he could see nothing but a wobble of grey. He looked up only just in time, to find the elephant almost on top of him. He escaped with his life, but only just, and the camera—a valuable full-plate—was utterly smashed.

In the few days that elapsed before retaliation could be taken, work on the railway was brought to a complete standstill. The elephant destroyed or derailed everything he could lay his trunk on, and chased anyone foolhardy enough to show himself.

That first night the coolies built large fires and threw on green bamboo so that the explosions should scare off the tusker; but in the morning they came back down the line and refused to go up it again till the elephant was shot. The edict went forth that the animal must die.

Edward took no hand in this part of the affair. He was saving to get married, and he could not afford *shikar*. Experienced shots were called in to get the rogue; but, before they could do so, two young subalterns on leave who had permits for the Runi block went in on their own with .303s and, as they claimed, finished him off. The elephant retired, badly wounded. Though the two youngsters followed, they were not able to come up with him to collect the tusks; but at any rate the rogue disappeared.

The railway went on into the jungle.

In due course the story of that first encounter of Edward's with the tusker reached high places, and some time later—he never knew why—he got a move and promotion.

He cabled for Dolly. She set out at once, the moment a second-class passage could be obtained.

By this time the Runital branch line had reached its objective, and Edward, who had secret, ridiculous superstitions of his own, found that he could take his bride up to Runi on the very first train. It seemed to him a seal of victory.

They were married in a chapel with a corrugated iron roof and the organ legs standing in

saucers of oil against white ants. Dolly wore a blue shantung coat to go away in and looked perfectly delightful.

She had sneezed and laughed over the champagne; and on the station, just before they left, she had a glass of milk to take the taste away. One drop of milk fell upon the lapel of the coat and, when they tried to sponge it off, they only spread the mark. Edward was concerned for her sake.

"Oh, never mind," Dolly smiled. "What does it matter?"

"I thought you said that if you have an accident with a dress the first time you wear it, there are always others."

"Oh that!"

They got into their compartment, where confetti was lying all over the dirty first-class floor. Doors slammed, whistles blew. The train set off for Runital.

When it got dark, naphtha flares were lit on the engine to scare animals off the line, and they chugged on into the night.

The flares lit the landscape each side of them

Continued on page 38

News of Edward's exploit reached high places and a little while later he was promoted. He sent for Dolly and they were married

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

He is in society's top hundred, popular with royalty. But before breaking into films, Niven had to work as a labourer

David Niven, the debonair tycoon

by REX GRIZELL

Charm has brought him success in society and on the screen. Now TV films have set him up in big business

A RECEPTION was held at Claridges Hotel a few weeks ago for David Niven, the British film actor, who had come to London to star in *The Silken Affair*. Niven dislikes large parties, and when he is obliged to attend he prefers them to be kept as informal as possible. On this occasion, one of the film's principal backers, a pleasant old city financier, felt he should make a speech welcoming Niven back to England. An old friend of Niven's, who knew that Niven loathes speeches even more than parties, did his best to dissuade the financier.

"I thought I'd succeeded," he says, "but the old boy was stubborn." With a beaming smile the city financier launched himself into what promised to be a speech of classic length. He was barely into his stride when he made an overlong pause at the end of a sentence.

"It was fatal," said Niven's friend. "Niven filled the pause with a short and witty phrase or two of thanks. He was polite and charming, but in less than half a minute he shut the old boy up like an oyster, and left him nothing to do but smile and sit down."

Niven's ability to get his own way while tempering his actions with an evergreen charm has brought him a fortune from the cinema. As long ago as 1939 he was receiving £40,000 a film. Since the war he has been one of the world's busiest and most travelled actors. He has made nine American and eight British films since 1947, and has crossed the Atlantic ten times.

Some of these films failed to impress the critics, but Niven kept working. He recently completed "the best rôle I have ever had," the biggest part, Phineas Fogg, in the Michael Todd production *Round The World In Eighty Days*, one of the most costly films ever made. *The Silken Affair*, not yet released, followed immediately and as soon as that was finished he began work on *The Little Hut*, with Ava Gardner and Stewart Granger.

While Niven's charm still pays big dividends in the cinema, his shrewdness is making him another fortune from television. He is a director with Charles Boyer and Dick Powell of Four Star Playhouse, which he describes as the second largest television film-making organization in the world. They have already made three hundred films, and will make another 120 this year. By the terms of their latest contract they receive two million dollars from their sponsors, and the films remain their property.

While Niven's shrewd business sense has brought him material success, his debonair charm and lively sense of humour have enabled him to climb to the top of the social ladder. According to friends, Niven is accepted in the top hundred of London society.

He is popular with the Royal Family. At one débutante party Niven was talking to Princess Margaret. In the middle of his story he became vaguely aware that although the orchestra was playing no one was dancing, and there was an air of expectancy in the room. Continuing with his story, Niven suddenly realized what was the matter. No one could dance until the Princess had taken the floor. "Come on, ma'am," he said, "This is our cue. We're on."

As soon as Niven lands in England the invitations begin to arrive. Niven, though he enjoys exclusive society, is sometimes obliged to take evasive action. Entering Claridges with a business friend one evening he said: "Look out, there's Bunny," using the nickname of a well-known duke, "let's dodge."

He quickly turned into a lift, but he was too late; the noble duke came across and invited Niven to his castle for the weekend.

This summer Niven and his Swedish wife, Hjordis, will be cruising with Prince Rainier and Princess Grace, in the royal yacht.

Niven went to Hollywood in 1934, but he has

Niven goes boating with his Swedish wife Hjordis in Surrey. They are the guests of Prince Rainier on a cruise this summer

On the lawn at Weybridge, Surrey, Niven and his wife join in a mock game of golf with ten-year old Jamie and his school friend

taken great pains to avoid "going Hollywood." He has not taken American citizenship, there is no trace of American accent or expression in his voice, his clothes remain conservatively English, and he has avoided the flamboyant behaviour often associated with stars.

But he has sometimes indulged a liking for practical jokes. In a ballroom scene in one Hollywood film, dancers refreshed themselves at a silver bowl of harmless fruit punch. During the lunch break Niven laced the punch with half a dozen bottles of gin. The afternoon's filming was interrupted several times because the dancers repeatedly crowded too thickly round the punchbowl.

He admits that his sense of humour sometimes gets the better of him. A few years ago he invited a wartime comrade, Jimmy Maclain, to Bermuda for a fishing holiday. As they approached the beach on the return from their first trip, Maclain looked over the side and, seeing the sandy bottom through the crystal clear water said he thought he would wade ashore. Niven, who knew the water was sixty feet deep, watched Maclain, a non-swimmer, gather his things carefully together and step confidently over the side.

"I lurched about helpless with laughter," says Niven. "In the end it was all I could do to get a rope to him before he went down for the third time."

NIVEN was educated at Stowe and Sandhurst and then joined the Highland Light Infantry. The day after he joined the regiment, he was asked to turn out for sabre practice with a senior officer, a fencing international, who had been buffeting all the subalterns for several weeks. Niven watched as the officer laid about him with malicious enjoyment. When his turn came, Niven, who had distinguished himself with the sabre at Sandhurst, set his jaw and in a few moments had disarmed the officer twice. Sabre practice was discontinued the next day.

With similar bumptiousness Niven breezed his way through two years' service with the regiment in England and Malta, giving his serious attention to parties and polo. Niven says he soon tired of wearing a tin hat in the blazing Maltese sun, and sent to London for an exact copy made of papier mâché. The deception succeeded until one day a sudden downpour made the helmet sag round his ears and streaked his face with dye.

Niven ended his peacetime soldiering in his usual debonair manner. Having overstayed his leave once too often, he sent his colonel a telegram, "Request permission to resign commission. Love. Niven." He sailed a few days later for the United States "to seek fame and fortune."

In 1939 the war found Niven in a different frame of mind towards the army. Still placing his faith in telegrams he arranged for one to be sent to Sam Goldwyn recalling Niven to his regiment. Though Niven was by then one of his biggest stars, Goldwyn suspended his contract for the duration.

He returned to the army and this time treated it without flippancy. He served in the Rifle Brigade, the Phantom Reconnaissance Unit and for a short time with the Army Film Unit. He rose to the rank of lieutenant-colonel. His flippancy returned the day he was demobbed. He collected his demob suit, wrote "Thanks for a lovely time" in the signing-off book, and the next day he was filming again.

Today Niven goes in for a number of sports including angling, tennis, spear fishing, riding and ski-ing. This activity, plus a conscientious daily dozen and a pernickety attention to food —plenty of underdone steaks, no bread or potatoes—keeps him looking less than his forty-six years. Niven has never smoked. His mother promised him £100 if he would not smoke until he left Sandhurst. Niven accepted the offer, and has never since felt inclined to change. He has two sons, David thirteen, and Jamie ten, both by his first marriage. He intends to make them the same offer when they are older.

In his early days in America Niven worked as a labourer in a road construction gang, as a cook, a liquor salésman, and a barman. In Atlantic City he promoted indoor pony racing until a local racketeer told Niven that he would collect twenty per cent of Niven's net profit. Niven told him to take a running jump off the roof of the arena. Next day the local tradesmen refused to supply Niven, and within a week he was out of business.

When he went to Hollywood and tried to break into films Niven's charm ensured his social success, and he spent his nights at a succession of parties. But it brought him no film work, and he spent his days working in a laundry, as deck hand on a fishing boat, and as a barman again.

Niven's luck changed when the Royal Navy cruiser Norfolk paid a goodwill visit to California. Niven secured an invitation to dine on board from friends whom he had known in Malta. The dinner party included Sam Goldwyn and some of Hollywood's most influential men.

One of the ship's officers recalled a party in Malta to which Niven had gone dressed as a goat. Niven seized the opportunity and used all his charm and skill as a raconteur to keep the guests entertained for two hours.

The party over, a pinnace was brought alongside to take the chief guests ashore. Niven noticed that it was crowded. "Don't bother about me, I'll walk," he said, as if he were leaving a party at a Mayfair flat. He stepped over the side and swam ashore. Goldwyn offered him a contract a few days later.

DESPITE the fact that he was described in a review of the first film in which he received a credit as "tall, dark, and not the slightest bit handsome," Niven rose to stardom within five years under Goldwyn's guidance.

Something of the conscientiousness which lies behind Niven's success, and which he rarely allows to be seen, was shown during the filming of *Round The World In Eighty Days*. All his life Niven has suffered from a fear of heights. When his Commando training during the war called for cliff climbs, Niven says, he was somewhere else fixing his equipment. He had accepted the part of Phineas Fogg when he discovered that some of the action took place in a balloon. Todd told him not to worry: the balloon would only be six feet off the ground.

When the time for shooting the balloon scenes came, Niven was told to report to a hill just outside Hollywood. At a point where the hill dived precipitously to the valley floor he found that Todd had placed one of the largest cranes in the world. At the end of the crane's 190-foot arm the balloon dangled. Niven felt faint, and thoughts of a stand-in passed through his mind. But there were two thousand Americans on the set, and everything was ready for him. "It seemed to me that I was carrying the weight of the British Empire," says Niven. He got into the basket.

While the Mexican comedian, Cantinflas, who plays his valet in the film, gaily pointed out things far below in the valley, Niven had to shut his eyes to prevent himself falling out. Shooting of the balloon scenes went on for three days, and Niven gradually became acclimatized. "My fear of heights is now practically cured," he says.

THE END

In *The Little Hut*, which is being made in England and Italy, David Niven stars with Ava Gardner and Stewart Granger

James saw the sailors grouped around the vicar. But one of

Applejack for Alexey

by ***KEM BENNETT***

ILLUSTRATED BY RICHARD O. ROSE

What a kick it had, this hooch! If James could do a deal with the Russians he would be rich . . .

IN the privacy of his bedroom Mr. James St. Winnow Gard-Montcrieff poured two and two-thirds fingers of gin into his tooth-glass and sploshed in a little soda-water from the private siphon he kept in his boot-cupboard. He put the drink down on his writing-table and looked at it sadly as if it were a very old, very dear, very disreputable friend.

James Gard-Montcrieff was depressed because only a moment or two earlier he had been looking at his bank statement. He sighed. He lowered half of the gin and put the glass back on the writing-table. A delicious little shudder ran down his spine, and he said aloud: "There is only one thing worse than a soak, James, and that is a gloomy soak. Brace yourself!"

Talking to himself was a habit which caused gossip in the neighbourhood, but, like gin, it was a habit he found difficult to break and pleasant to indulge. He indulged it, but always with respect for convention if he could; James was sixty and had been strictly brought up and abhorred the thought of attracting attention to himself.

When he had finished his gin, he took his cheque-book and, in the hall downstairs, his deerstalker hat, his raglan overcoat and his walking stick. He left his brother's house and walked over the hill to Trevecca Farm, encountering a buzzard perched on a telegraph post.

He looked up at the bird severely and said

hem crouched behind a tomb and bargained—for a bottle

aloud: "Things are critical, my friend, but not yet suicidally so. I shall not be a dead duck for several years to come, God willing, so you had better fly away and stop looking at me in that appraising manner."

The buzzard took him at his word and flew away and James nodded.

At Trevecca he found Fernley Brewer and permitted himself to be led into the cider-pound, where he accepted a pint of rough with his usual courtesy.

After civilities had been exchanged, he said: "I think I had better have that barrel of last year's that we were talking about, Fernley. If you could run it over to the cottage for me, I should be obliged."

He added, as he saw apology start to crawl across Fernley's ripe red face, "I will give you a cheque for it now."

And he did; which put the kybosh on his bank balance once and for all. Then he went home for lunch.

HENRY GARD-MONTCRIEFF was in the drawing-room, sipping South African sherry. He did not offer James a glass. Presently it was announced that lunch was served, and the two brothers went into the dining-room, where they sat at opposite ends of a long mahogany table. Above the fireplace, behind James, a picture of their father stared into the room with the menacing expression of a man constantly expecting to have to spend money. Henry resembled his father. James did not.

There was no conversation until Henry said: "Are you not feeling hungry, James? Or do you not care for fish pie?"

James hated fish pie almost as much as he hated Henry, but he answered politely: "I'm afraid I don't seem to have much appetite."

"You should work, dear boy. If only you would settle down to work you would have plenty of appetite."

"Yes, Henry."

"We are especially busy at the office and your help would be appreciated."

"I'm so glad you're busy."

"Will you come in tomorrow, then?"

"No, Henry. I promised myself to start translating Spontanelli on Toadstools tomorrow."

"Bah, waste of time!"

"If you think so, Henry."

"If you would come into the office regularly for two months I would be prepared to increase your January allowance."

"By how much, Henry?" James asked.

"Ahem! A tenner! There, what about it?"

"I think not," James said with dignity. "I hope to make more out of my translation."

Henry made a noise with his long, thin nose which sounded like *hewff*! There was a kink in the middle of its aquilinity caused by the impact of a cricket bat many years before. James had been holding the cricket bat at the time. He looked at the kink and smiled secretly, and they finished their lunch in silence.

That afternoon, when Henry had left for the office, James put on his hat and coat again. This time he walked in a different direction, through a large wood in which Henry Gard-Montcrieff the First had liked to shoot pheasant and woodcock.

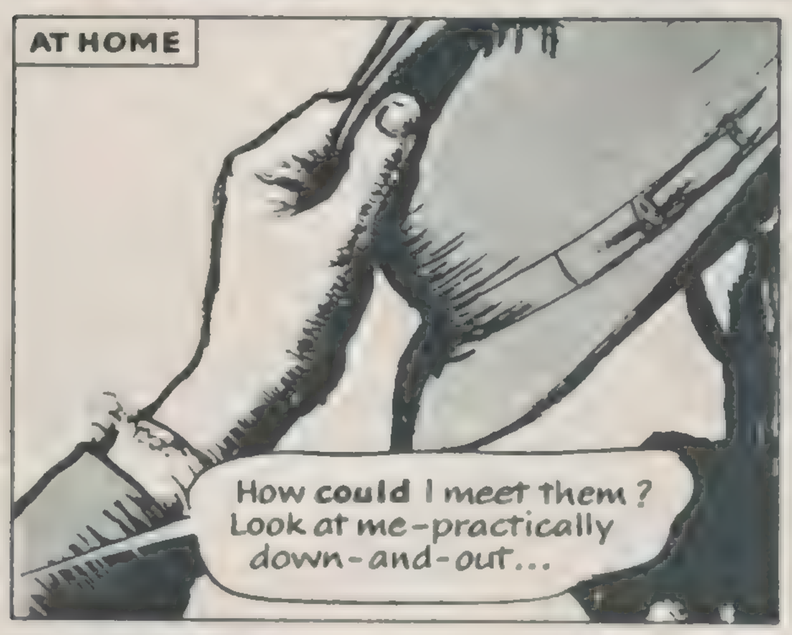
There was a derelict gamekeeper's cottage at the far end. James pushed open the unlocked front door and saw that Fernley Brewer had, as promised, delivered the barrel of cider. It had been put, also as promised, on the old kitchen range with its back up the open chimney.

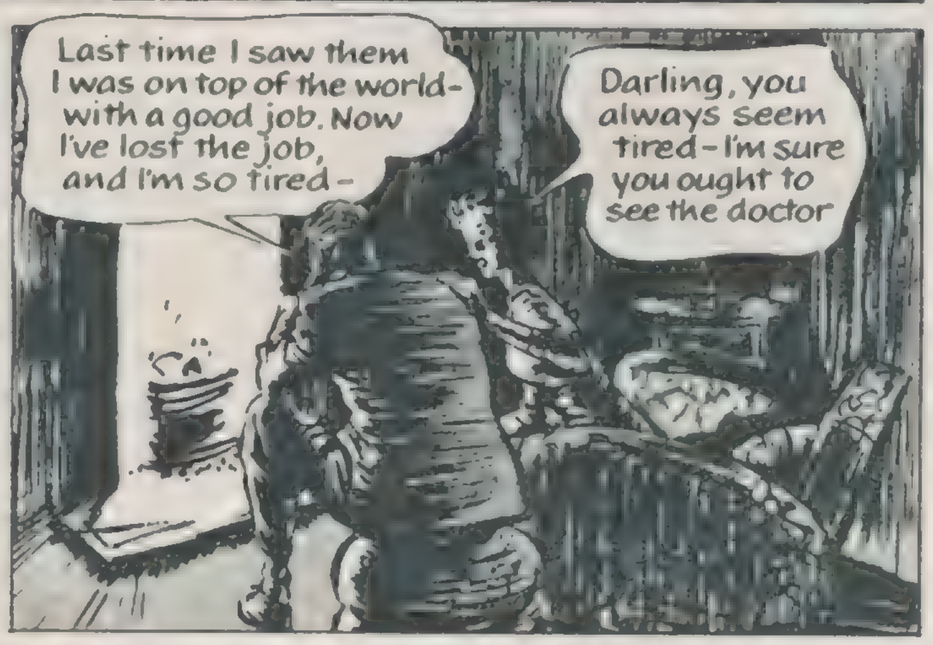
JAMES took off his hat and coat and put on a blue gardener's smock which he took from a cupboard with a secret catch of his own devising. Also in the cupboard was a chest, which he unlocked and then took from it the various parts of a brand-new still.

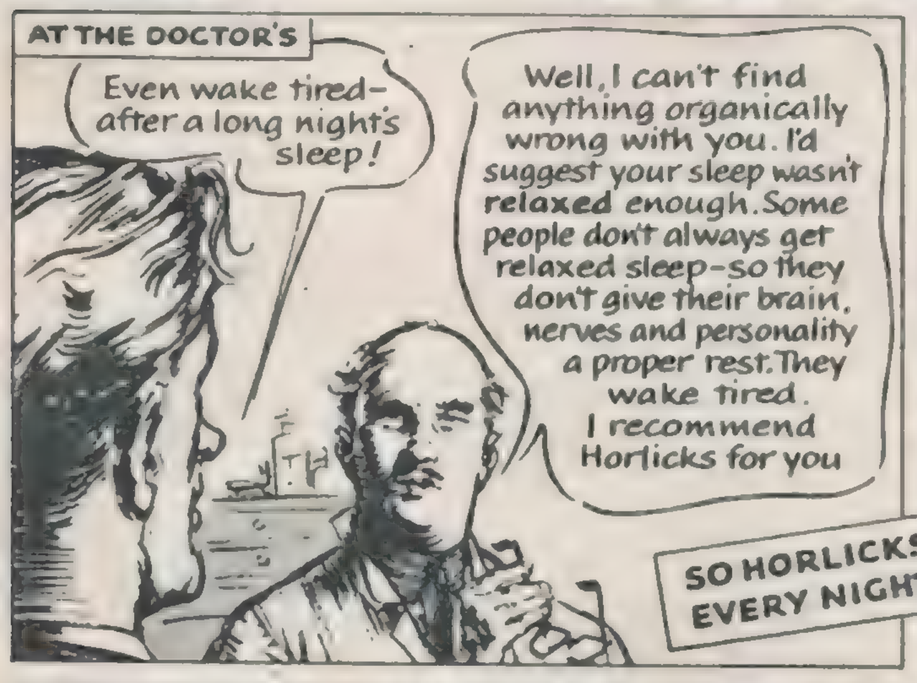
He mounted a burner, fuelled with methylated spirit, on a broken-down table. He arranged two large two-gallon glass flasks so that the burner could be put under either one with convenience, and connected them via a two-way tap to a glass water-cooled condenser. He busied himself with plastic tubing, thermometers, bottles, beakers, and a textbook on distillation, all of which came from the secret chest.

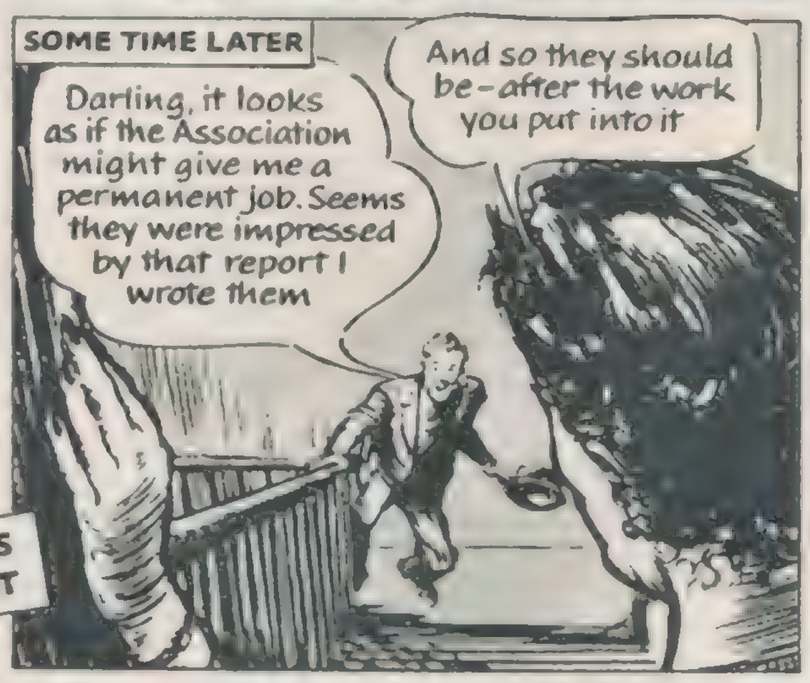
Presently James broached the barrel of cider

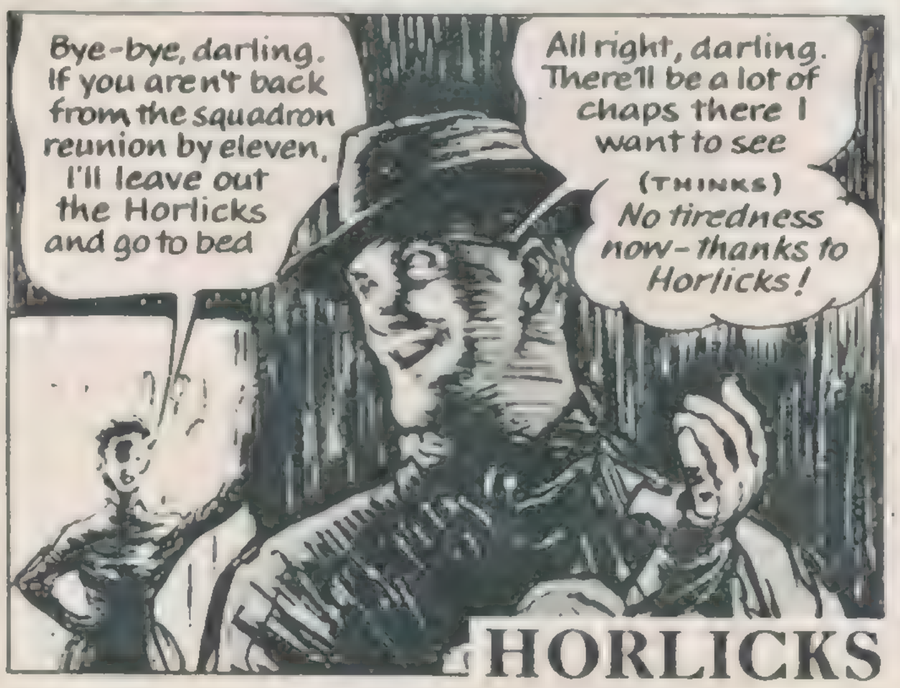
He was ashamed to meet his friends!




Last time I saw them I was on top of the world-with a good job. Now I've lost the job, and I'm so tired-
Darling, you always seem tired-I'm sure you ought to see the doctor

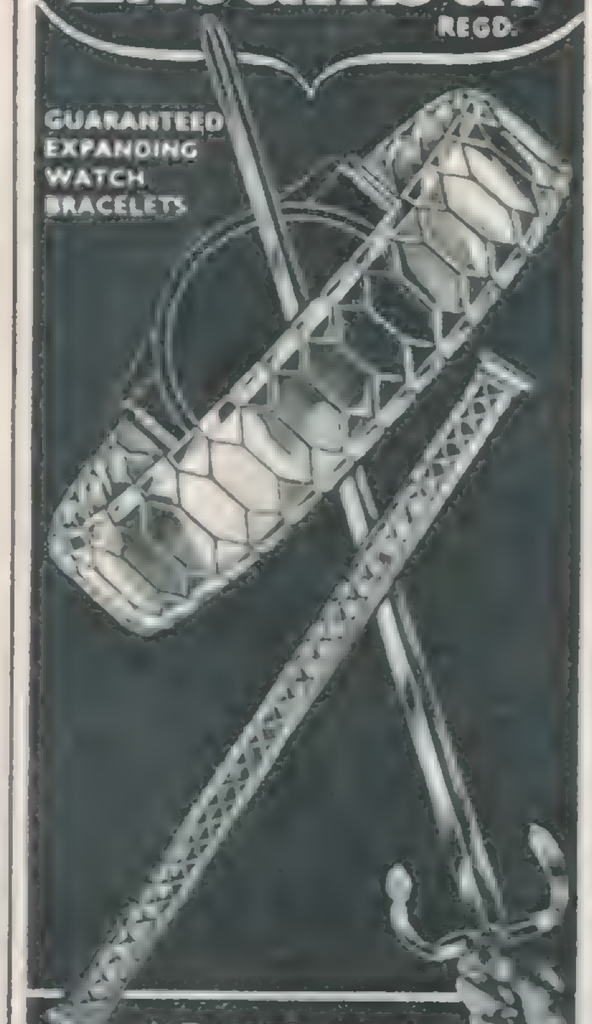

AT THE DOCTOR'S
Even wake tired-after a long night's sleep!
Well, I can't find anything organically wrong with you. I'd suggest your sleep wasn't relaxed enough. Some people don't always get relaxed sleep-so they don't give their brain, nerves and personality a proper rest. They wake tired. I recommend Horlicks for you
SO HORLICKS EVERY NIGHT


SOME TIME LATER
Darling, it looks as if the Association might give me a permanent job. Seems they were impressed by that report I wrote them
And so they should be-after the work you put into it


Bye-bye, darling. If you aren't back from the squadron reunion by eleven, I'll leave out the Horlicks and go to bed
All right, darling. There'll be a lot of chaps there I want to see
(THINKS)
No tiredness now-thanks to Horlicks!

HORLICKS

Excalibur
REGD.



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and tried it. It was, as cider went, very good, very dry, which meant that nearly all the sugar had worked into alcohol, and very refreshing. In any quantity it could be relied upon to be exhilarating, but it was inclined to produce acidity and James was not, anyway, a cider drinker, so that was that. He set to work to convert the cider into something with less bulk, less acidity and far more *zing*, ignoring the fact that the penalty for doing so was a very large fine, with the alternative of imprisonment.

The afternoon progressed. The cider boiled merrily in the flasks. A colourless liquid dripped with gratifying rapidity from the delivery end of the condenser. James spent his time reading Spontanelli on Toadstools, only pausing now and again to refill one or other of the flasks.

Round about teatime James decided to try his product for quality. It was still warm. He took a sip from a beaker, and his blue eyes widened. He coughed. A hectic flush crept into his apple cheeks and he sat down hastily, pressing a hand to his chest, waiting for the furnace to die down for lack of fuel.

Eventually, when he had his breath back, he said aloud: "Oh, dear!" Then he consulted the textbook. He went to the burner and adjusted the flame, meanwhile taking readings from the thermometer.

He worked on, hour after hour, and by half-past ten he had fifteen bottles of distillate and no cider. He had increased the dilution until the bottles contained two-thirds spirit to one-third water, but the stuff was still, obviously, blood-brother to nitric acid.

Then he gave up and went home. Henry was waiting, filled with questions as to where he had been. James forgave him for losing his temper and went sadly to bed. He had blown every penny of pocket money he would possess until January next, two months away, on fifteen bottles of a liquid only suitable for keeping anatomical specimens in.

He told himself that he should never have boasted to that damn buzzard, because things, now, had indeed become almost suicidally bad.

The following morning James tried to put the bite on Henry for something on account, a thing predestined to fail. All he got was a lecture on idleness and the refusal to face reality, to which he was forced to listen because Henry had him in the palm of his long-fingered, over-freckled hand.

He went to Fowey, needing the presence of human beings about him. He was sitting taking the sun on a bench in the churchyard with one eye on the Gard-Montcrieff family tomb in the corner—wishing that Henry was in it—when he saw the crew of a Russian merchantman being shown round the church by the vicar.

They were nearly all of them large men, with big, flat, bony faces and protruding ears, and what the vicar was telling them through an interpreter was evidently making them feel even sadder than James was feeling. He watched them compassionately for some time, suffering for them, and was therefore a witness when one of the seamen detached himself surreptitiously from the crowd and went into conference behind a tomb with Banger Jago, the dray-man for the local brewer. Jago gave the Russian a bottle-shaped parcel and the Russian gave Jago his wrist-watch.

A FEW minutes later James wandered pensively into the bar of the Fiddle and Capstan, where he bought himself a small gin which he stretched almost to infinity by drinking it in a large glass with half a pint of soda-water.

As he had thought it would be, the most popular topic in the bar was the Russian ship and her crew. He learned that she was moored in mid-stream just below Bodinnick, that she had three days to wait before she went to Number Eight jetty to take on four hundred tons of china clay, and that the crew were never permitted to go ashore except in conducted parties.

He also gained fresh evidence that the Russian was a thirsty ship when the landlord said that only that morning he had been forced to refuse a thick wad of rouble notes, offered via an intermediary, for a bottle of spirit. Any spirit. . . .

That night after dark, James rowed out to the M.V. Kurtamysk in a borrowed dinghy. In the bottom of the boat, between his feet, lay two bottles of home-brew. He hoped—how he hoped!—that Russian seamen accustomed to drinking cheap vodka would find the firewater palatable. What would happen if they didn't, having first been exhilarated by the prospect of a drink, he hardly dared imagine.

Twice, he nearly turned back, but he bravely put down diffidence, fear of rebuff and fear of retribution, and guided his boat towards the gangway hanging from the Kurtamysk's side.

He had been talking to himself in an encouraging whisper all the time he was rowing and had evidently attracted attention, because as soon as he made fast to the gangway a head appeared at the top.

"Good evening," James said, his heart in his mouth. "Er . . . do you speak English?"

The head made an incomprehensible noise and disappeared. James waited, blaming himself for having even contemplated so foolish a project. Footsteps sounded on the deck above and another head appeared. "What do you wish?"

Excellent English. James licked his lips. "My name is Gard-Montcrieff," he said.

No response. The Gard-Montcrieffs cut no ice in Leningrad, apparently.

"I live nearby," James went on, "I . . . I happened to see a transaction in the churchyard this morning, and I was led to believe that you might be short of something to drink, so I brought along some applejack I had to spare. I . . . ha-ha . . . I don't approve of men being denied a little drink now and again, you know. I thought I owed it to common hospitality to make an offering."

Silence.

"Do I make myself clear?" James added anxiously. "I hope I haven't done wrong. I'll be off if you don't want the stuff. . . ."

"Did you say aquavit, kind sir?" the voice asked breathlessly.

"No, applejack . . . APPLEJACK!"

"Ssh!"

"Forgive me . . . it's, er . . . much the same thing."

"Come aboard, kind sir," the voice said, "Do

Continued on page 32

"Vandal!" shouted Alexey Yumashev. "This is the man. . . . He is a madman. He is a fighting demon"

Gaston de Freyssenet assists a searcher with the index

Treasure house of open secrets

by PETER MICHELMORE

Birth, death and marriage—200 million certificates record

What's in a name? Thousands of people get a surprise about themselves when they call in at Somerset House

A BOWLER-HATTED young man, who had called at the public search room of the General Register Office in Somerset House one morning last May for a copy of his birth certificate for a passport application, hunted through the indexes for hours before he complained that his name was not there.

"Are you sure your birth was registered under your present name?" asked the officer in charge, Gaston de Freyssenet.

"No," said the young man. "The family name is M——, but it was an embarrassment to me so I had it changed by deed poll." De Freyssenet found the true registration in the index and firmly refused to issue the certificate in the new name. "Just give me the form," said the man hotly. "I'll write my own. It cost me £50 to change my name and I intend to keep it." He calmed down when de Freyssenet told him there should be no difficulty in getting a passport in the name by which he was known.

"Birth certificates can be changed only under very special circumstances, although several people have tried," says de Freyssenet, a stocky, placid Londoner of French descent who has served the public since 1930 in the tracing of registration certificates.

"Certificates give the facts at birth. However, a Christian name given to a child shortly after birth may be added to the record if a baptism certificate is produced. A new birth record may be made where a child is legitimated by the subsequent marriage of its parents, and the record may also be corrected if there is an error in it. These are the only changes permitted."

De Freyssenet and the other officers in the registration section handle eight thousand applications a week for certificates of births, deaths and marriages which occurred in England and Wales during the past 119 years. Scotland and Ireland have their own register offices.

The General Register Office has operated at Somerset House since July 1, 1837, when the Registration Act and the Marriage Act provided for the registration of all births, deaths and marriages. About two thousand registrars in England and Wales, paid by local councils but working under instructions from the Registrar-General, Sir George North, keep the original registers, but exact copies are deposited at Somerset House. With about 600,000 births, 500,000 deaths and 350,000 marriages every year, the number of certificate copies in the vaults is nearly 200 million.

Facts revealed by these documents are not always pleasant, and tact is part of the registration officer's job. The director of a well-known London company applied for a birth certificate recently to submit to an insurance firm as proof of his age. A blank space where the father's name and occupation normally appear showed that the man was illegitimate.

"I had no idea," said the company director when de Freyssenet drew him aside. "What can I do?" De Freyssenet advised him to take a "short" certificate, which gives only the name, sex, date and place of birth—no parental names. The director quickly agreed.

Short certificates were introduced shortly after the last war mainly for the benefit of people with a similar problem—there are 30,000 illegitimate births in England and Wales every year—but millions have been issued now, and not only to illegitimate people. They cost 9d. against 3s. 9d. for a full certificate.

Some people still consider quite wrongly that a short certificate hints too much at illegitimacy. A well-dressed woman with a Mayfair address refused the offer of a short certificate recently when the copy of the full one showed her to be illegitimate. She paid her 3s. 9d., tore the document to shreds and dropped the pieces into a waste paper basket, apparently thinking she had destroyed the evidence for ever.

"Thousands of people discover unsuspected things about themselves when they visit Somerset House," says de Freyssenet.

BIRTH certificates are most in demand to prove age for national insurance, passports, pension schemes and often for people taking new jobs. It is estimated that only one person in ten thousand does not have his birth registered now. Failure to register births has been illegal since 1875. But frequent applications are made by older people who can trace no record at all of their birth. School statements, early insurance policies, baptism certificates, family Bible entries or hospital records are suggested as other

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

them at London's General Register Office

means of proving age. When these do not exist officers often turn detective to trace details of birth.

A middle-aged and very agitated twin brother and sister recently appealed to executive officer Iris Alston to find some sort of birth record so that they could claim an inheritance abroad. "Our parents died when we were very young," explained the brother. "As far as documentary evidence is concerned, we just don't exist."

Another officer who joined the case reasoned that the couple, both with professional practices in London, might well have a family background of some standing and that their birth might have been announced in *The Times*. He searched the newspaper file for January, 1904, their birth month, and found the record they needed.

Census returns are not used for search purposes as they are in the United States and other countries. The General Register Office conducts the census of England and Wales in the first year of each decade, but with the assurance that details will be kept strictly confidential. Hundreds of requests to trace missing people through the census returns are refused.

Earliest records in the Somerset House vaults go back to a baptism in 1567 at the Chapel of God's House, Southampton, but little searching is done before 1837 because of incomplete records.

Old records in the vaults include various parish registers introduced by Thomas Cromwell in 1538, detailed pre-1837 Quaker registers, and a large collection of nonconformist registrations dating back to 1642. Dozens of postal applications from people overseas who want to trace their ancestry are handled every week, but details supplied must be complete for success.

A few weeks ago a Canadian wrote from Toronto: "I desperately need a birth certificate to claim social security benefits and you are my only chance, I was born in London in 1889 and I celebrate my birthday on June 2, although I have never been certain of the exact date. I was sent to Canada at age eleven, my folks long since dead, and about the only thing I know of my early childhood is that I was once at some council home called Ealton."

Russell checked the name the man had signed to his letter in the 1889 registration indexes, but without luck. London County Council said there was no such home as "Ealton," but perhaps the man meant Eltham.

Files at this home showed that a child of the man's name had been admitted on November 7, 1891, at three years of age, having been transferred from the Bermondsey home. At Bermondsey it was recorded that this child, aged two, son of a woman with a different surname, had entered on October 2, 1891. Russell checked the registration indexes again, this time under the mother's surname.

He found the birth certificate he wanted and a true birthday for the Canadian to celebrate—October 22.

CERTIFICATES of adoption are kept at Somerset House, but they carry only the date and country of birth, the date of adoption, the new name and sex of the child, the new parents and new address. A copy of the original birth certificate is somewhere in the vaults in every case, but there is no way of linking the two.

One woman telephoned Somerset House from Manchester in noticeably high spirits. "I have just come into a lot of money," she said happily. "I had my daughter adopted two years ago, but I can provide a good education for her now. If you'll just be so good as to trace the new parents. . . ." Somerset House could not help. It was a court matter.

Applicants pay about £60,000 a year to get copies of birth, death and marriage certificates, and in most cases they are satisfied customers. There was a notable exception one day last spring. A Mayfair socialite who was about to marry the daughter of a titled landowner came to the public search room with the idea of tracing what he thought were his illustrious ancestors. He was keen to impress his future father-in-law with titles of his own. Apparently he had known little about his family because the more he searched and the more certificates he collected, the more depressed he became.

On the third day of his search he stood before the officers' counter with a sheaf of certificates in his hand. "Shipping clerk, shoemaker, gas-fitter!" he said, reading off the occupations. "To heck with the lot of them." He walked angrily out of the room and one officer had to chase him to get the money for the last three certificates.

A breathless young couple came to see de Freyssenet at 12.15 one day. They were to be married at Caxton Hall at 1.30 and the woman said she needed a birth certificate to prove that she was over twenty-one and did not need parental consent.

After a quick search through the index, de Freyssenet telephoned details to Cornwall House in Stamford Street, where the registers since 1880 are kept, and had an immediate search made for the necessary document.

The precious certificate arrived in the Strand at 1.15 by messenger. The young man shook de Freyssenet's hand warmly and beamed when he was told that there was no extra charge for express delivery. "It's a pleasure to do business here," he called as they raced off to a waiting taxi. "I'll see that you get our marriage certificate too."

THE END

A tense eye-witness story of adventure among men who pioneer in Antarctica

Expedition South

by Major W. E. ANDERSON

Major W. E. Anderson

FRESH from the battlefields of Korea, Major William. Ellery Anderson sought new adventures in one of the most desolate and dangerous regions of the world—the forbidding Antarctic.

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Anderson's only companions were the men on his station . . . the volatile Argentinians at a neighbouring base who threw lavish parties one day and sparked off an international incident on the next . . . and the magnificent teams of husky dogs that are vital to survival in the cruel Antarctic.

Once, when shooting seal meat for the dogs, he became marooned at dusk on an island of ice. *"My boots were full of water and the cold began eating into me. Then I realized that I was drifting, a current was taking me out to sea. . . ."*

Every tense moment of Anderson's thrilling expedition is recorded in this, his own story. Superbly illustrated by maps and full-colour photographs, it begins . . .

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

Preparing to dive twenty feet down, in a cove on the River Dart, a pupil puts on his aqua-lung. Hampton gives him a hand

Hampton watches the start of a backward somersault in the third and last lesson. He teaches only one diver at a time

The captain's frogmen take the plunge

by KEITH ELLIS

At his school Trevor Hampton will bring underwater adventure to a Siamese prince — or a grandmother

CAPTAIN TREVOR HAMPTON gave a sigh of relief. Two miles from his base near Dartmouth, Devon, the outboard motor of his open, flat-bottomed diving-boat had stripped its gears, and together with the trainees returning from the morning's diving session he had faced an indefinitely delayed lunch. Now a motor-driven yacht had appeared, chugging slowly towards the mouth of the River Dart. Cupping his hands, Hampton called: "Can you give us a tow?"

"We'd like to," came the reply, "but we haven't the power. A rope has fouled one of our propellers."

Hampton grinned. "We'll soon fix that," he said.

Strapping an aqualung, weights, mask and flippers on one of his divers, he sent him over the side. "He quickly disentangled the rope," Hampton recalls, "and the yacht gave us a tow." He adds: "Most of my pupils come here for sport but they all have an eye on the main chance. Many of them end up by earning their living at diving."

Since Hampton himself earns part of his income from diving, he now makes each of them sign a declaration that "no professional underwater work will be undertaken or carried on by me within one hundred nautical miles from Dartmouth."

A relaxed, muscular jack-of-all-trades—he has been engineer, fisherman, yachtmaster, salesman, insurance agent and test-pilot, and has even built his own house at Dartmouth—Hampton now runs a comprehensive underwater training centre. His courses range from elementary free-diving with aqualung or oxygen apparatus to full standard diving with metal helmet, air-lines and rubber suit. He also teaches underwater cutting and blasting.

Apart from accompanying Hampton himself on such underwater work as blasting, concreting, recovering sunken vessels and surveying moorings, ex-pupils have found many ways in which they can supplement their incomes. One got eighteen months' highly paid work on the film *Moby Dick*. Another joined the expedition that searched for the sunken Spanish galleon in Tobermory Bay, Scotland. This summer, twenty are helping to search for another Spanish galleon believed to have sunk near the Scillies.

Still more find that a diving course helps them

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in their regular work. These include geologists, marine surveyors, underwater photographers and customs officers. One Scottish fisherman intended to lie on the sea-bed and find out at first-hand why lobsters refused to enter his pots. A woman biologist spent many hours under water painting by a special process pictures of marine creatures she needed for a book.

"Diving is no longer a specialist job," says Hampton in his Birmingham voice. "It's just one part of a professional man's equipment. Instead of hiring a diver, he likes to go down and take a look for himself. This has been possible only since the invention of the self-contained breathing apparatus."

But he emphasizes the dangers. Divers may suffer from oxygen poisoning, or nitrogen narcosis —"the bends." They may cause serious illness, paralysis or death. A swimmer holds his breath when coming up from the bottom. If a diver does so when his apparatus fails, the compressed air or oxygen he has been breathing may burst his lungs. "That's why training is necessary," says Hampton. "People buy equipment and go diving without learning how to use it. They don't appreciate the risks they run."

Even a heavy meal or slightly imperfect health may cause trouble. Recently an ex-pupil who was emigrating to America came out for a last dive. "He was an excellent diver but he soon got into difficulties and swam frantically towards the boat. We pulled him on board and he passed out. When he came to, he said: 'I've just had my inoculations.' I could have hit him."

Dressed in shirt, shorts, plimsolls and a red fisherman's cap, Hampton takes out diving parties at 9.30 a.m. and 2 p.m., seven days a week. Usually, they consist of three pupils (never more) and two or three qualified divers who want to go down for sport. He chooses a sheltered cove near the mouth of the River Dart where the water is clear and up to twenty feet deep, and he teaches one pupil at a time.

Most take the three-lesson aqualung course and wear either a frogman suit, a sponge-rubber suit or a heavy woollen sweater to help to keep out the cold. Hampton shows them how to put on their flippers, face-mask and the weights necessary to counteract the natural buoyancy of the body. Secured by a safety-line, they then enter the water by a ladder hanging from the end of the boat.

For the first two lessons, he explains the use of the apparatus, teaches them how to swim, loop, somersault and dive, and has them rest on the bottom when they are tired. In the third lesson, they learn how to enter the water with a backward somersault off the side of the boat, and by swimming about freely convince him that they are both confident and competent. The lessons last about half an hour each and are taken on separate days.

Pupils come from every walk of life, with a particularly high proportion of doctors, dentists, bank-clerks, Harwell scientists and colonial servants on leave. They have included a peer, a Siamese prince (third-class), oil men, farmers, grocers, Antarctic explorers, the crocodile hunter Brian Dempster and the ventriloquist Bobbie Kimber. One of the oldest was Hampton's sixty-six year old mother; the youngest, a twelve-year-old boy. "The standard is exactly the same for everyone," he says. "After all, one life is as valuable as another."

Reactions vary. Some people have ear trouble but it usually passes. One robust Scotsman was so nervous that he refused to leave the bottom rung of the ladder. Surprisingly, strong swimmers often get into difficulties. "They go at it too boisterously," says Hampton. "They're so used to having to swim to keep afloat that they forget breathing apparatus enables them just to hang in the water."

Some panic. During her third lesson, one girl lost her mouthpiece under water. Instead of replacing it as she had been taught, she thrashed about and accidentally struck the quick-release pin of her weight-belt. With nothing to hold her down, she came to the surface where she struggled, panted and swallowed water.

Hampton called to the diver who was watching her to break the carbon-dioxide capsule which inflated her life-jacket. She was then able to make her own way back to the boat. But he told her that she would have to take the lesson again.

In more than ten thousand descents he has supervised, Hampton has lost only one diver. That was last year, when a twenty-three year old man went down in about seventy feet of choppy water only a mile offshore. He was a qualified diver, the best pupil Hampton ever had.

Though about one in five fail the course, few are unable to pass on subsequent attempts. One of the exceptions was an ungainly man who after five lessons finally managed to do all the exercises that Hampton set him. "But I couldn't pass him. He had negative buoyancy. Instead of floating, his body naturally sank in water. I had to tell him that it would be unwise for him to attempt any more diving." Later a doctor pupil told Hampton that only one person in nine hundred had negative buoyancy.

IN the last four years, more than three hundred pupils have passed the basic course. They include thirty "mermaids" (women) and five "tadpoles" (children under fourteen). Each is presented with a certificate conferring membership of the underwater centre, a privilege which allows him to hire equipment and go out diving with Hampton when there is room in the boat. Fourteen pupils have gone on to take his full standard diving course and have gained his Master Diver's Certificate, which is becoming recognized as a professional qualification.

Born in Birmingham forty-three years ago, Trevor Arthur Hampton first felt the call of the sea when he was invited on board a yacht during a family holiday at Bournemouth. After serving his time as an engineer, he set out at nineteen to paddle round the world in a canoe, gave up in Paris and returned to work as a tester in a motor-cycle factory. "I became works manager but at twenty-six I retired and bought a five-ton yacht."

Except for war service as a test pilot and a postwar spell of aerial target-towing, he spent his time in small boats, making a living out of fishing, charter-work, marine engineering and yacht captaincy. In 1951 he took a diving course, and afterwards opened his underwater centre. Bookings now keep him busy instructing from May to September. His headquarters is the small modern house built into the cliff at Warfleet Creek, Dartmouth, where he lives with his wife Gwyneth and eight-year-old daughter Jill.

Pupils pay five guineas for the three-lesson course in either aqualung or oxygen equipment. Use of a frogman suit costs five guineas extra and a complete course in standard diving £42. Hampton's season is short and his costs heavy. The cheapest aqualung costs £40, a frogman suit £16. Students often damage them and he does not charge extra. His overheads include a heavy telephone bill, advertising costs of £10 a month and the maintenance of three boats.

Although most pupils take their training seriously, a few do not. Hampton told one girl taking her second lesson to climb down the ladder, raise her face-mask to let in the water and clear it out by blowing through her nose. When she came up, he saw that her nose was still dry and her eyes, instead of being pink from the salt, were clear and white. "Now do it properly," he said.

The girl glared. "I've just done it."

"Well, this time, *really* do it."

She disappeared down the ladder. When she came up again. Hampton again saw that her nose was dry. "You *still* haven't done it," he said.

"Yes, I have."

"No, you haven't."

For a moment, they stared into each other's faces. Then the girl blurted out: "I'm going to a dance tonight. I don't want my eyes all pink."

Hampton insisted until she did it properly. "If a pupil disobeyed," he says, "I should give him his money back. You can't afford to take risks underwater." THE END

One of Hampton's pupils surfaces with a Dover sole. Another was a fisherman who wanted to lie on the sea-bed to discover why lobsters refused to enter his pots

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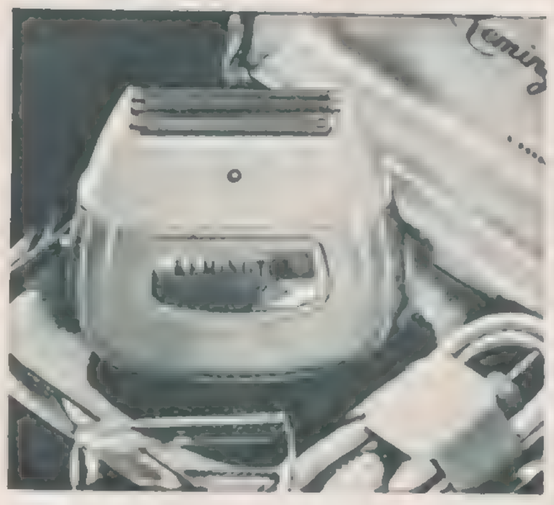

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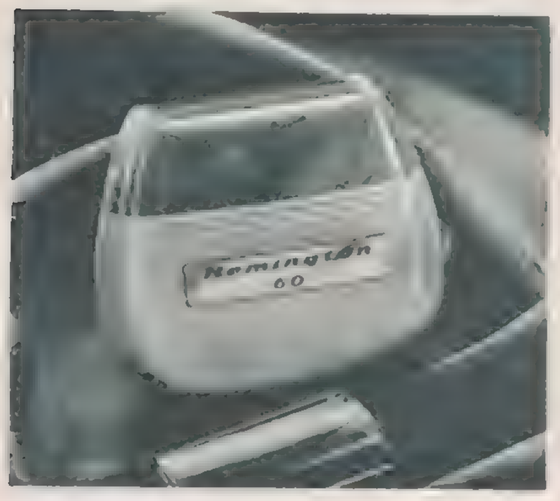

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Applejack for Alexey

Continued from page 25

not make too much noise. If the captain and the officers were not being entertained by the mayor I could not ask you, but it is so. Please, kind sir, step aboard."

James mounted the gangway. He held out the bottles. "I don't think I'll come below, if you don't mind," he said nervously. "Just try these—with my compliments."

The man who spoke English took the bottles. With his free hand he took James's arm and squeezed it. "What a kindness! I shall never forget it, kind sir."

James took the plunge. "Ahem! Should you . . . should you find the stuff palatable, Mr. er . . . um . . . er, I have a few more bottles that I could let you have. Not, I am afraid, as a gift, but very cheaply. Oh yes, very cheaply. . . ."

"So!" It was whispered. James blinked. So much gratitude, such friendliness, such love, all expressed in one very small word. He started to feel guilty. "Come!" the Russian was saying. "Come, sir, descend! We will open these beautiful bottles and make toasts. Come! It is quite safe; the captain will not be back for two hours or more."

"I don't think I will. I have an appointment. I ought to be. . . ."

"I insist! I will take no answer but yes. We shall drink to friendship. You cannot refuse, sir. Come!"

JAMES went, his arm gripped far too firmly for him to shake it free without giving offence. He went reluctantly towards a companionway through which light was shining.

He found himself in the seamen's mess. It seemed to be filled with big, flat, alien faces. Grins appeared one by one at the sight of the bottles.

James looked at his English-speaking friend for the first time in the light and saw that he wore an officer's uniform but without badges of rank. He was shorter than any of the crew, although still a big, burly man, and he had black hair, whereas most of the seamen were blond. He explained that they were Latvians, not Russians.

"Alexey Yumashev," he said, introducing himself with several bows. "Enchanted! Welcome aboard the Kurtamysk, sir. Please be seated."

A minute later James had a glass in his hand. As he looked at it the remainder of his courage ran out through the soles of his galoshes. He devoutly wished he were at home in bed. "I don't think I will, if you don't mind, Mr. Yumashev. I . . . I find it a little strong. My doctor. . . ."

Alexey Yumashev snorted. "Just one. To drink to our friendship and to your superb generosity. Please, kind sir, come, come! We have caviare here and biscuits, and if you take some caviare after liquor, however strong, it subdues it. Please to believe me."

Half an hour later, James was feeling well. He found himself unable to imagine why he had found his applejack so completely non-potable. It was young, of course, and a little harsh, but then it had the exuberance of youth to make up for its harshness.

The first bottle of applejack had gone; it had emptied itself like a conjuring trick. The second bottle, which seemed to be reserved for Alexey and himself, was still two-thirds full.

"Good health!" Alexey was saying. "To peace! Down with the hydrogen bomb!" The contents of his glass shot into the back of his throat. He shuddered. "Aah! If only one could always drink such nectar!"

"Thank you," James said a moment later. "I don't mind if I do." He drank. Courage was strong in him. "Alexey," he went on, "about the other bottles. I have a baker's dozen. I should be glad to, er . . . part with them."

"A baker's dozen? What is this for idiom?"

"Old-fashioned," James said. "Like me. It means thirteen."

Alexey stared sombrely down at the table between them. "Thirteen!" he whispered. "Fancy! An unlucky number, no? It is for us, for we have no money to pay. Only roubles. Thirteen bottles, my!"

James said: "Roubles? Oh!" He remembered the landlord of the Fiddle and Capstan. If Bill Bennett could not transmute roubles into pounds then neither could he. "We, er . . . might arrange a system of barter," he suggested.

"Barter? You mean wrist-watches? We have none left. Nor any valuables. We have been here for five days, you see. We were very thirsty."

"What a very great pity!" James said. And then, to excuse himself for failing to be generous, added: "If only I were a rich man, you should have the lot, Alexey, as a gift. But I am not."

"No?"

"No. My father was. Very rich, yes. But unfortunately he disapproved of me. He disapproved of me so greatly that he directed in his will that all of his fortune should go to my brother, who was to maintain me and make me an allowance, but never to let me get my hands on my share of the beastly fortune in case I should spend it. My father regarded spending money as the ultimate sin. . . ."

"Ah!" Alexey said. "Now do you see, kind friend, how wrong is the principle of inheritance? It leads to injustice and hatred, always, not so?"

"It is probably unwise to generalize," James said. "Ahem, would you care to fill my glass? I don't think the inheritance principle is fundamentally as bad as you say, but I must confess that it had bad effects in my case. Your good health, Alexey."

"Co-existence!" Alexey shouted.

"Thirty-five years ago," James went on reminiscently, "my father's will was executed and I entered my brother's house as a dependent. I am ashamed to confess that I cannot now look at Henry without thinking of the properties of prussic acid. Had I been a free man I am sure that I would still love my brother; I have a loving nature. Circumstances have forced me into hatred."

Alexey groped for James's hand, in sympathy and brotherly love.

It was midnight. The second bottle was dead. Someone had produced an accordion and the sailors were dancing. James and Alexey were singing. Alexey stopped in mid-phrase. He struck himself smartly on the forehead. "All this you have told me, James. . . ."

"Yes, Alexey."

"About the money being truly yours. . . ."

"Yes, Alexey?"

"Supposing you were to break up the ship, what would happen?"

"Break up the ship! Goodness gracious me, I should go to jail."

"Not if we refused to prosecute and merely asked for damages, not so?"

"Umm——"

"Do you not see, my good friend? You make damage. We demand payment. To protect the name of Gard-Montcrieff, your brother is forced to pay. You give us the applejack. We give you the money. What subtlety!"

"What," James murmured dubiously, "about the captain?"

"The captain! Pig-fat! He is too stupid. To the police I say one thing; to the captain another. It is easy. I swear. No buts! Come, come, have courage! It shall be done!"

"I really don't think——"

"Silence!" Alexey shouted, turning to the dancing sailors. "Paleckis! You have permission to fight Lacis." The man with the accordion dropped it and hit one of the dancers shrewdly in the kidneys. "Kelnberzine!" Alexey shouted. "You at last are permitted to slaughter Snieckus!" Two more of the crew stopped dancing and started

FOOLS—1

The best way to convince a fool that he is wrong is to let him have his own way.

Josh Billings

Spot the Lawbreaker

Somewhere in this scene, the law is being broken. Can you see where? A barrister gives the answer on page 34

DRAWN BY RONALD LAMPITT

to hammer one another into Baltic pulp. Alexey picked up one of the dead bottles and threw it at a man with his back turned. The man looked round furiously, chose a nearby head and hit it with a coffee pot.

With a wild, heedless excitement throbbing in his veins James reached for the second applejack bottle and hurled it at an open cupboard at the far end of the mess where crockery was stacked. He scored a bull's eye and the sound of shattering plates glorified the night.

"Come!" Alexey said urgently. "Once they are started they do not know when to stop."

At the head of the gangway he embraced James. James withdrew as soon as he felt it polite to do so. Alexey stared for a long silent minute into his eyes.

James fidgeted. "Ahem . . . well . . . goodbye, Alexey. I hope we have done right. I——"

"Not to worry," Alexey said. "Leave all to me. . . ."

It was half past ten the following morning when the policeman arrived. James had a headache. Police Constable Pierce saluted. "Morning, sir. Sergeant wants to see 'ee."

James nodded. His headache worsened. "If you will wait while I put on my galoshes," he said, "I am at your disposal, Mr. Pierce.

It was cold crossing the Bodinnick ferry. A bitter November wind was blowing up the estuary. James looked at the unladen bulk of the Kurtamysk riding high in the water, and shuddered. Madness! Sheer madness! Goodness gracious! How, in the name of good fortune, could he have been so mad?

Alexey was waiting in the police station. He had with him the Kurtamysk's captain, a thick-set, round-faced man with a look of child-like innocence in his blue eyes, dressed in his best uniform. He had also Kelnberzine, Snieckus, Lacis and Paleckis, all of them as burly as Sergeant Fisher, who was a big Cornishman measuring six feet two in his socks. Henry was there, called from his office, sitting in appalled silence.

Sergeant Fisher said gloomily: "I can't believe it, Mr. Yumashev, but I reckon we better have 'un again so Mr. Gard-Montcrieff can say tisn' true."

Alexey Yumashev pointed an accusing finger at James. "Vandal!" he shouted. "This is the man! This is the man who forced his way aboard the Kurtamysk. He is a madman. He is a fighting demon. He broke Snieckus's nose. Snieckus, show them. He blacked Paleckis's eye. See, how it is black. He hurled bottles in his drunken rage. All crockery is smashed. Three chairs are broken. The table is beyond repair. . . ."

At the end, Sergeant Fisher said: "Well, Mr. James sir. I expect you have an alibi. Will you tell they Russian liars where they get off, now?"

James swallowed. "I did it," he whispered.

"Eh!"

"I did it."

Henry rose to his feet, looking like a disgusted ostrich. "Delusions," he said. "Had we not better send for Doctor Binns?"

James took a deep breath and set his jaw. "I'm sorry. I must have been a little drunk," he said clearly and decisively. "Everything that the gentleman says is, unfortunately, true."

SILENCE. Henry sat down. Sergeant Fisher let out a hushed whisper, "Lord love us!"

"I am empowered by my captain to say that we do not wish to prosecute," Alexey announced in a loud voice. "However, we insist that at least the madman shall pay us damages. The cost is estimated at one hundred and twenty pounds."

Henry Gard-Montcrieff was on his feet, shouting. "Nonsense! It is bare-faced blackmail. I tell you it is impossible. . . ."

It was all over by midday. Like a man in a dream James walked through the streets of Fowey towards the Fiddle and Capstan. As he walked he ran the gamut of wondering tongues. "You don't say, my dear? Fancy that now! And him so small a man, an' all."

In the bar of the Fiddle and Capstan big rough men hastened to make way for him. . . .

James did not go home for lunch. He spent the afternoon in his secret cottage deep in thought, and as soon as it was dusk he put the remaining bottles of applejack in a basket and set out for Bodinnick slip, taking care to be unobserved. He rowed out to the Kurtamysk where he stayed for a quarter of an hour only. Then he

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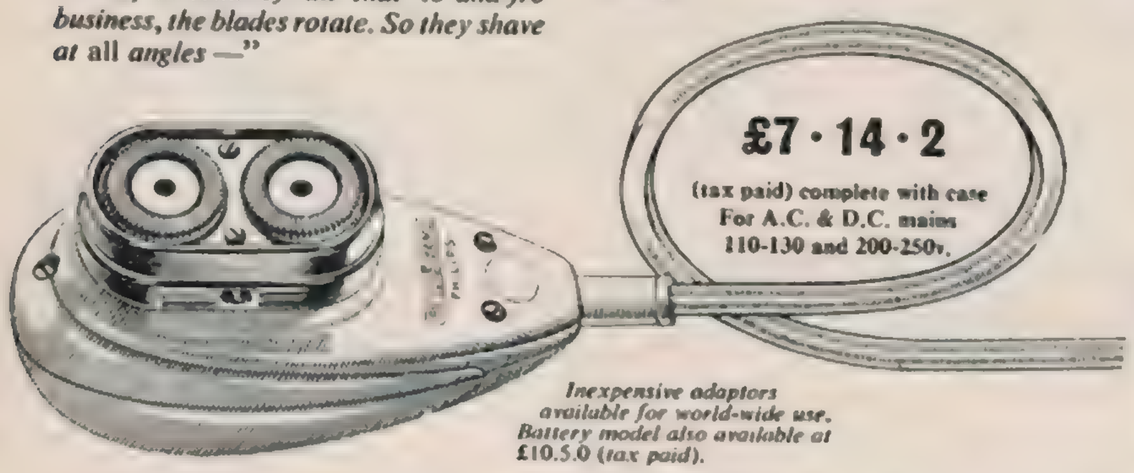

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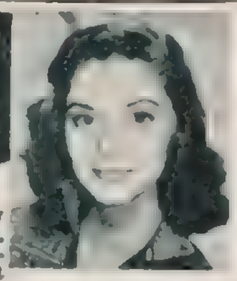

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rowed to the yacht club. He was greeted with cheers.

He did not go home for dinner.

Eventually, at eleven o'clock, he did go home. Henry was waiting in the study. "Well," he said coldly, "what——?"

James cut him short. "Spare me the rebukes, Henry," he said incisively. "You are not your brother's keeper." He crossed the room and stood with his back to the fire, legs straddled, chest out, hands crossed beneath the tail of his coat. "I want my money, Henry," he said. "Father left a hundred and eighty thousand. Half of that is ninety thousand. You've had the use of it for thirty-five years and you've trebled it, by now. I ought to demand interest, but I won't. I have simple needs."

Henry snarled: "You're mad. Go to bed."

James crinkled the wad of pound notes in his pocket—the wad Alexey had given him. He chuckled. "I'll give you until Thursday," he said. "If you haven't paid up by then I shall break up the Fiddle and Capstan. On Friday I'll do the yacht club. On Saturday I think I shall go to Bodmin—county town, you know—and take care of the Miner's Arms. . . ."

"If you so much as break another glass in a public place you'll find yourself in prison, you demented idiot."

"Shall I, Henry?" James asked. "A Gard-Montcrieff? In prison? Do you think you'll be able to bear it? I doubt if they'd actually ask you to

FOOLS—2

Young men think old men are fools; but old men know young men are fools.

George Chapman

resign at the yacht club, but I bet you'd have to put up with some pretty funny remarks at Rotary. They think your nose is held too high in the air already and they're aching for a chance to get in a dig or two. It is too high in the air, by the way; you're only a provincial industrialist. Small beer compared to the big boys."

"Ingrate!"

James laughed. "Think, Henry! Time and time again. A hundred pounds here. Fifty there. They might get tired of me and give me a short sentence or two; but I should come out, you know, and as soon as I did you'd start paying up again for damages. . . .

"Come now! Face the facts. It will be easier, far less embarrassing, and in the end cheaper, probably, to let me have my ninety thousand. Father meant me to have it. You were the man who changed his mind for him, really. I fear I hate you, Henry, so don't imagine I wouldn't do it."

"The money is bound up in shares," Henry said sullenly. "How can you expect me to have it ready by Thursday?"

"Just deed over the shares, Henry," James said. "Just deed over the shares, dear boy. I shall be able to live quite comfortably on the income.

"On the other hand a bit of ready cash would be useful, so we'll say eighty-five thousand in securities and five thousand cash. How about that? You could give me the cheque for the five thousand now—to keep me from temptation, if you catch my meaning."

"No! A thousand times no!"

"Yes, Henry. Just once. Yes!"

Henry Gard-Montcrieff gnashed his teeth. He took his cheque-book from a drawer in the bureau. He picked up a pen.

James sat down, in Henry's chair, and put his feet up. And when Henry stormed from the room in apoplectic silence he went to the bureau and smiled down at the cheque. He picked it up, popped it in his pocket. And then he went happily to bed, taking with him his well-annotated copy of Spontanelli on Toadstools. THE END

Dead man's folly

Continued from page 14

those pegs over there, will you? I want to mark the places for the clock golf numbers."

Poirot, thus pressed into service, was worked by Mrs. Masterton relentlessly, as a useful apprentice. She condescended to talk to him in the intervals of hard labour.

"Nice to have Nasse lived in again. We were all so afraid it was going to be an hotel. You know what it is nowadays; one drives through the country and passes place after place with the board up 'Guest House' or 'Private Hotel' or 'Hotel A.A. Fully Licensed.' The houses one stayed in as a girl—or where one went to dances. Very sad.

"Yes, I'm glad about Nasse, and so is poor dear Amy Folliat, of course. She's had such a hard life—but never complains, I will say. Sir George has done wonders for Nasse—and not vulgarized it. Don't know whether that's the result of Amy Folliat's influence—or whether it's his own natural good taste. He has got quite good taste. Very surprising in a man like that."

"He is not, I understand, one of the landed gentry?" said Poirot cautiously.

"He isn't even really Sir George—was christened it, I understand. Took the idea from Lord George Sanger's Circus, I suspect. Very amusing really. Of course we never let on. Rich men must be allowed their little snobberies, don't you agree?

"The funny thing is that in spite of his origins George Stubbs would go down perfectly well anywhere. He's a throwback. Pure type of the eighteenth century country squire. Good blood in him, I'd say. Father a gent and mother a barmaid, is my guess."

Mrs. Masterton interrupted herself to yell to a gardener: "Not by that rhododendron—You must leave room for the skittles over to the right. *Right*—not left!"

She went on: "Extraordinary how they can't tell their left from their right. The Brewis woman is efficient. Doesn't like poor Hattie, though. Looks at her sometimes as though she'd like to murder her. So many of these good secretaries are in love with their boss.

"Now where do you think Jim Warburton can have got to? Silly the way he sticks to calling himself 'Captain.' Not a regular soldier, and never within miles of a German. One has to put up, of course, with what we can get these days—and he's a hard worker—but I feel there's something rather fishy about him. Ah—here are the Legges."

Peggy Legge, dressed in slacks and a yellow pullover, said brightly: "We've come to help."

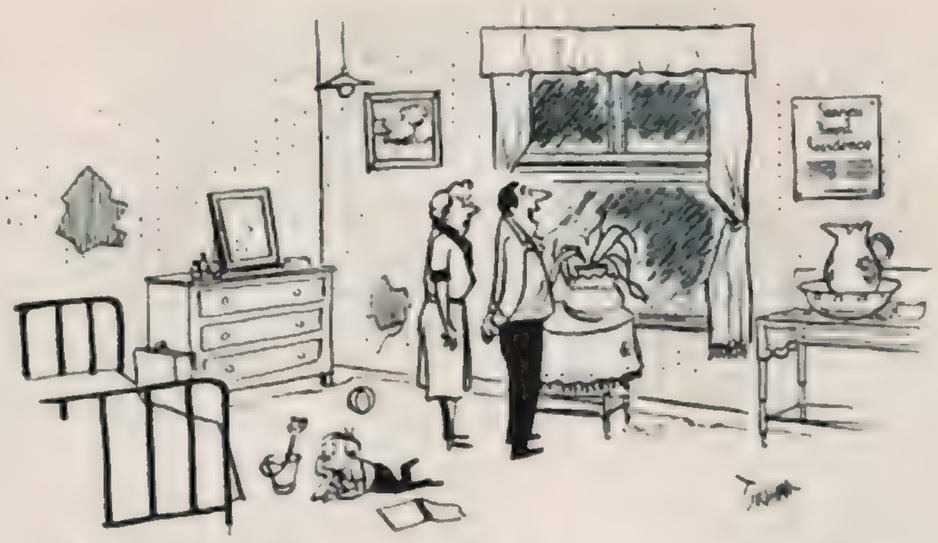
"Lot to do," boomed Mrs. Masterton. "Now, let me see. . . ."

Poirot, profiting by her inattention, slipped away. As he came round the

Spot the Lawbreaker

See page 33

FIRING a gun or pistol within fifty feet of the centre of a roadway is illegal when it causes "injury, interruption or personal danger" to a passer-by. If, says a barrister-at-law, the report of the boy's air pistol "interrupts" the passage of anyone travelling on the road, then the culprit can be summonsed. Under the Highway Act of 1835, he is liable to a fine of up to £2.



"Well, thank goodness we didn't go to an expensive hotel"

corner of the house on to the front terrace he became a spectator of a new drama.

Two young women, in shorts, with bright blouses, had come out from the wood and were standing uncertainly looking up at the house.

In one of them he thought he recognized the Italian girl to whom he had given a lift towards the youth hostel the day before.

From the window of Lady Stubbs's bedroom Sir George leaned out and addressed them wrathfully. "You're trespassing," he shouted.

"Please?" said the young woman with the green head-scarf.

"You can't come through here. Private."

The other young woman, who had a royal blue head-scarf, said brightly: "Please? Nassecombe Quay?" She pronounced it carefully. "It is this way? Please."

"You're trespassing!" bellowed Sir George.

"Please?"

"*Trespassing!* No way through. You've got to go back. *BACK!* The way you came!"

They stared as he gesticulated. Then they consulted together in a flood of foreign speech. Finally, doubtfully, blue-scarf said: "Back? To hostel?"

"That's right. And you take the road—*road*—round that way."

Poirot turned to find Mrs. Oliver and a well-developed girl of fourteen dressed in Guides' uniform close behind him. "This is Marlene," said Mrs. Oliver.

MARLENE acknowledged the introduction with a pronounced snuffle. Poirot bowed politely.

"She's the Victim," said Mrs. Oliver.

Marlene giggled. "I'm the Horrible Corpse," she said. "But I'm not going to have any blood on me." Her tone expressed disappointment.

"No?"

"No. Just strangled with a cord, that's all. I'd have liked to be stabbed—and have lashings of red paint."

"Captain Warburton thought it might look too realistic," said Mrs. Oliver.

"In a murder I think you ought to have blood," said Marlene sulkily. She looked at Poirot with hungry interest. "Seen lots of murders, haven't you? So *she* says."

"One or two," said Poirot modestly. He observed with alarm that Mrs. Oliver was leaving them.

"Any sex maniacs?" asked Marlene with avidity.

"Certainly not!"

"I like sex maniacs," said Marlene with relish. "Reading about them, I mean."

"You would not like meeting one."

"Oh, I dunno. D'you know what? I believe we've got a sex maniac round here. My granddad saw a body in the woods once. He was scared and ran away, and when he came back it was gone. It was a woman's body. But of course he's batty, my granddad is, so no one listens to what he says."

Poirot managed to escape from her and, regaining the house by a circuitous route, took refuge in his bedroom. He felt in need of repose.

Lunch was an early and quickly snatched affair of a cold buffet. At two-thirty a minor film star was to open the fête.

The weather, after looking ominously like rain, began to improve. By three o'clock the fête was in full swing. People were paying the admission charge of half a crown in large numbers, and cars were lining one side of the long drive. Students from the youth hostel arrived in batches, conversing loudly in foreign tongues.

TRUE to Mrs. Masterton's forecast, Lady Stubbs had emerged from her bedroom just before half-past two, dressed in a cyclamen dress with an enormous coolie-shaped hat of black straw. She wore large quantities of diamonds.

Miss Brewis murmured sardonically: "Thinks it's the Royal Enclosure at Ascot, evidently."

But Poirot complimented her gravely. "It is a beautiful creation that you have on, madame."

"It is nice, isn't it?" said Hattie happily. "I wore it for Ascot."

The minor film star was arriving and Hattie moved forward to greet her.

Poirot retreated into the background. He wandered around disconsolately—everything seemed to be proceeding in the normal fashion of fêtes. There was a coconut shy, presided over by Sir George in his heartiest fashion, a skittle alley and a Hoop-la. There were various "stalls" displaying local produce of fruit, vegetables, jams and cakes—and others displaying "fancy objects." There were raffles of cakes, of baskets of fruit; even, it seemed, of a pig; and a Lucky Dip for children at twopence a go.

There was a good crowd of people by now, and an exhibition of children's dancing began. Poirot saw no sign of Mrs. Oliver, but Lady Stubbs's cyclamen-pink figure showed up among the crowd as she drifted rather vaguely about.

The focus of attention, however, seemed to be Mrs. Folliat. She was quite transformed in appearance. Wearing a hydrangea-blue foulard frock and a smart grey hat, she appeared to preside over the proceedings, greeting new arrivals, and directing people to the side-shows.

Poirot lingered near her and listened to some of the conversations.

"Amy, my dear, how are you?"

"Oh, Pamela, how nice of you and Edward to come. Such a long way from Tiverton."

"The weather's held for you. Remember the year before the war? Cloudburst came down about four o'clock. Ruined the whole show."

"But it's been a wonderful summer this year. . . . Dorothy! It's ages since I've seen you."

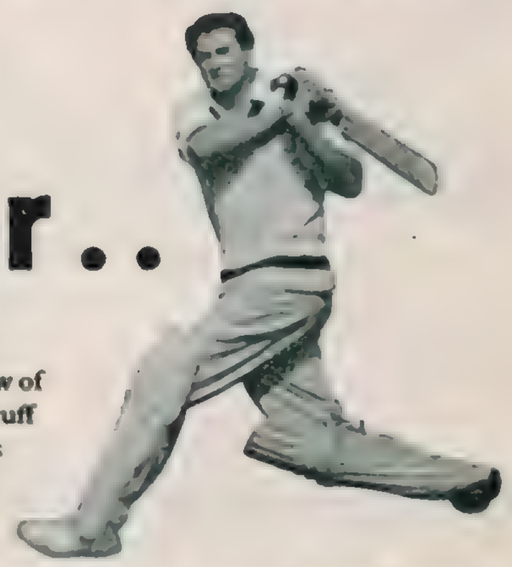
"We felt we had to come and see Nasse in its glory. I see you've cut back the berberis on the bank."

"Yes, it shows the hydrangeas better, don't you think?"

"How wonderful they are. What a

Who is *this* man of the world?
The badge from his blazer is the clue.

Men of the World all the World over . .



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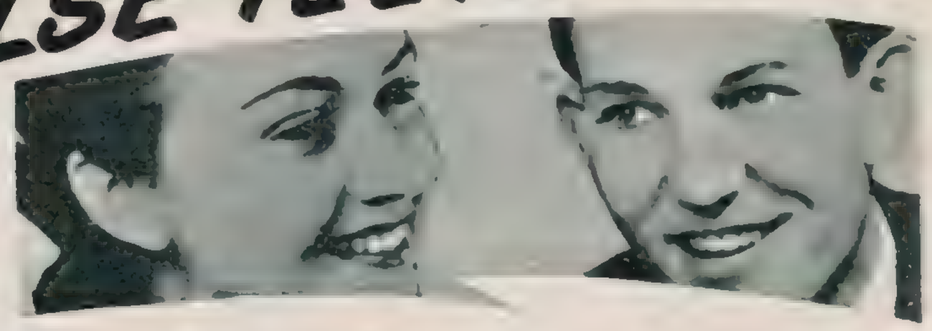

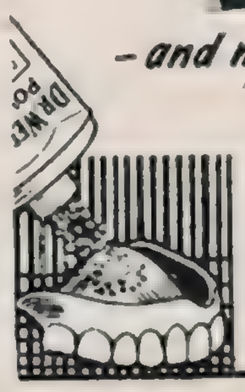

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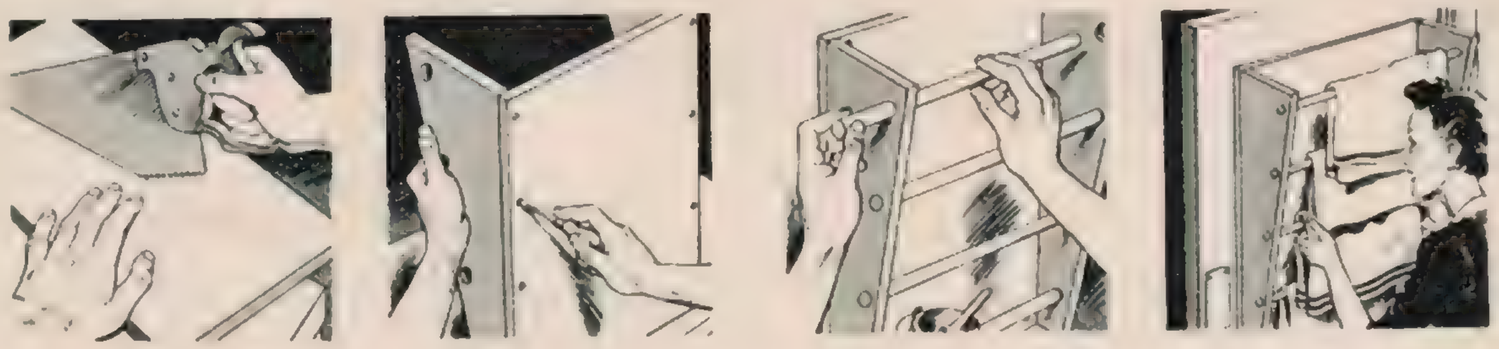


THE rack I have made will hold all the family face towels without any overlapping. On to a base 2 ft. by 3 ft. 6 in. I screwed two side pieces which I made by sawing diagonally across a board 3 ft. 6 in. by 7 in. The side pieces were drilled to hold 1-in. dowelling for the rails, and after fixing the base to the bathroom door I painted the rack to tone in with the room's colour scheme. The rack allows towels to dry much more quickly, and as each member of the family uses one rung regularly our towels never get mixed.
—*John S. Bunegar, Other Road, Redditch.*

blue! But my dear, you've done wonders in the last year. Nasse is really beginning to look like itself again."

Dorothy's husband boomed in a deep voice: "Came over to see the commandant here during the war. Nearly broke my heart."

Poirot moved slowly away and absent-mindedly invested a shilling on a ticket that might win him the pig. He heard faintly still, the "So good of you to come" from behind him. He wondered whether Mrs. Folliat realized how completely she had slipped into the rôle of hostess, or whether it was entirely unconscious. She was, very definitely this afternoon, Mrs. Folliat of Nasse House.

He was standing by the tent labelled: *MADAME ZULEIKA Will Tell Your Fortune.* Teas had just begun to be served and there was no longer a queue for the fortune telling. Poirot bowed his head, entered the tent and paid over his half-crown willingly for the privilege of sinking into a chair and resting his aching feet.

MADAME ZULEIKA was wearing flowing black robes, a gold tinsel scarf wound round her head and a veil across the lower half of her face which slightly muffled her remarks. A gold bracelet, hung with lucky charms, tinkled as she took Poirot's hand and gave him a rapid reading, agreeably full of money to come, success with a dark beauty and a miraculous escape from an accident.

"It is very agreeable all that you tell me, Madame Legge. I only wish that it could come true."

"Oh!" said Peggy. "So you know me, do you?"

"I had advance information—Mrs. Oliver told me that you were originally to be the Victim, but that you had been snatched from her for the Occult."

"I wish I was being the Body," said Peggy. "Much more peaceful. All Jim Warburton's fault. Is it four o'clock yet? I want my tea. I'm off duty from four to half-past."

"Ten minutes to go, still," said Poirot, consulting his large old-fashioned watch. "Shall I bring you a cup of tea here?"

"No, no I want the break. This tent is stifling. Are there a lot of people waiting still?"

"No. I think they are lining up for tea——"

"Good!"

Poirot emerged from the tent and was immediately challenged by a determined woman and made to pay sixpence and guess the weight of a cake.

A Hoop-la stall presided over by a fat, motherly woman urged him to try his luck and, much to his discomfiture, he immediately won a large Kewpie doll.

Walking sheepishly along with this, he encountered Michael Weyman, who was standing gloomily on the outskirts near the top of a path that led down to the quay.

"You seem to have been enjoying yourself, Monsieur Poirot," he said with a sardonic grin.

Poirot contemplated his prize. "It is truly horrible, is it not?" he said sadly.

A small child near him suddenly burst out crying. Poirot stopped swiftly and tucked the doll into the child's arm. "*Voilà*, it is for you."

The tears ceased abruptly.

"There—Violet—isn't the gentleman kind?"

"Children's Fancy Dress," called out Captain Warburton through a megaphone. "The first class—three to five. Form up, please."

Poirot moved towards the house and was cannoned into by a young man who was stepping backwards to take a better aim at a coconut. The young man scowled and Poirot apologized, mechanically, his eye held fascinated by the varied pattern of the young man's shirt. Every kind of turtle, tortoise and sea monster appeared to be writhing and crawling over it.

Poirot blinked and was accosted by the Dutch girl to whom he had given a lift the day before. "So you have come to the fête," he said. "And your friend?"

"Oh yes, she too comes here this afternoon. I have not seen her yet, but we shall leave together by the bus that goes from the gates at five fifteen. We go to Torquay and there I change to another bus for Plymouth. It is convenient."

This explained what had puzzled Poirot, the fact that the Dutch girl was perspiring under the weight of a rucksack.

He said. "I saw your friend this morning."

"Oh yes, Elsa. A German girl was with her and she told me they had tried to get through to the river and quay. And the gentleman who owns the house was very angry and made them go back."

She added, turning her head to where Sir George was urging competitors at the coconut shy: "But now—this afternoon, he is very polite."

Poirot considered explaining that there was a difference between young women who were trespassers and the

FOOLS—3

If fifty million people say a foolish thing, it is still a foolish thing.

Anatole France

same young women when they had paid half a crown entrance fee and were legally entitled to sample the delights of Nasse House and its grounds. But Captain Warburton and his megaphone bore down upon him. The captain was looking hot and bothered.

"Have you seen Lady Stubbs, Poirot? Anyone seen Lady Stubbs? She's supposed to be judging this fancy dress business and I can't find her anywhere."

"I saw her, let me see, oh—about half an hour ago. But then I went to have my fortune told."

"Curse the woman!" said Warburton angrily. "Where can she have disappeared to? The children are waiting and we're behind schedule as it is." He looked round. "Where's Amanda Brewis?"

Miss Brewis, also, was not in evidence.

"It really is too bad," said Warburton. "One's got to have *some* co-operation if one's trying to run a show. Where can Hattie be? Perhaps she's gone into the house." He strode off rapidly.

Poirot edged his way towards the roped-off space where teas were being served in a large marquee, but there was a long queue waiting and he decided against it. He inspected the Fancy Goods stall where a determined old lady very nearly managed to sell him a plastic collar box, and finally made his way round the outskirts to a place where he could contemplate the activity from a safe distance.

He wondered where Mrs. Oliver was.

Footsteps behind him made him turn his head. A young man was coming up the path from the quay; a very dark young man, faultlessly attired in yachting costume.

He paused as though disconcerted by the scene before him. Then he spoke hesitatingly to Poirot.

"You will excuse me. Is this the house of Sir George Stubbs?"

"It is indeed." Poirot paused and then hazarded a guess. "Are you, perhaps, the cousin of Lady Stubbs?"

"I am Etienne de Sousa."

"My name is Hercule Poirot."

They bowed to each other. Poirot explained the circumstances of the fête. As he finished, Sir George came across the lawn towards them from the coconut shy.

"De Sousa? Delighted to see you! Hattie got your letter this morning. Where's your yacht?"

"It is moored at Helmmouth. I came up the river to the quay here in my launch."

"We must find Hattie. She's somewhere about. . . . You'll dine with us this evening, I hope?"

"You are most kind."

"Can we put you up?"

"That also is most kind, but I will sleep on my yacht. It is easier so."

"Are you staying here long?"

"Two or three days, perhaps. It depends." De Sousa shrugged elegant shoulders.

"Hattie will be delighted, I'm sure," said Sir George politely. "Where is she? I saw her not long ago." He looked round in a perplexed manner. "She ought to be judging the Children's Fancy Dress. I can't understand it. Excuse me a moment. I'll ask Miss Brewis."

He hurried off. De Sousa looked after him. Poirot looked at de Sousa.

"It is some little time since you last saw your cousin?" he asked.

The other shrugged his shoulders. "I have not seen her since she was fifteen years old. Soon after that she was sent abroad—to school at a convent in France. As a child she promised to have good looks." He looked inquiringly at Poirot.

"She is a beautiful woman," said Poirot.

"And that is her husband? He seems what they call 'a good fellow,' but not perhaps very polished? Still, for Hattie it might be perhaps a little difficult to find a suitable husband."

Poirot remained with a politely inquiring expression on his face. The other laughed. "Oh, it is no secret. At fifteen Hattie was mentally undeveloped. Feeble-minded, do you not call it? She is still the same?"

"It would seem so—yes," said Poirot cautiously.

DE SOUSA shrugged his shoulders. "Ah well! Why should one ask it of women—that they should be intelligent. It is not necessary."

Sir George was back, fuming. Miss Brewis with him, speaking rather breathlessly.

"I've no idea where she is, Sir George. I saw her over by the fortune teller's tent last. But that was at least twenty minutes or half an hour ago. She's not in the house."

"Is it not possible," asked Poirot, "that she has gone to observe the progress of Mrs. Oliver's murder hunt?"

Sir George's brow cleared. "That's probably it. Look here, I can't leave the shows here. I'm in charge. And Amanda's got her hands full. Could you possibly have a look round, Poirot. You know the course."

But Poirot did not know the course. However, an inquiry of Miss Brewis gave him rough guidance. Miss Brewis took brisk charge of de Sousa and Poirot went off murmuring to himself, like an incantation: "Tennis court, camellia garden, the Folly, upper nursery garden, boathouse. . . ."

As he passed the coconut shy he was amused to notice Sir George proffering wooden balls with a dazzling smile of welcome to the same young Italian woman whom he had driven off that morning and who was clearly puzzled at his change of attitude.

He went on his way to the tennis court, but there was no one there but an old gentleman of military aspect who was fast asleep on a garden seat with his hat pulled over his eyes. Poirot retraced his steps to the house and went on down to the camellia garden.

In the camellia garden Poirot found Mrs. Oliver dressed in purple splendour, sitting on a garden seat in a brooding attitude and looking rather like Mrs. Siddons.

She beckoned him to the seat beside

her. "This is only the second clue," she hissed. "I think I've made them too difficult. Nobody's come yet."

At this moment a young man in shorts, with a prominent Adam's apple, entered the garden. With a cry of satisfaction he hurried to a tree in one corner and a further satisfied cry announced his discovery of the next clue.

Passing them, he felt impelled to communicate his satisfaction. "Lots of people don't know about cork trees," he said confidentially. "Clever photograph, the first clue, but I spotted what it was—section of a tennis net.

"There was a poison bottle, empty, and a cork. Most of 'em will go all out after the bottle clue—I guessed it was a red herring. Very delicate, cork trees, only hardy in this part of the world. I'm interested in rare shrubs and trees. Now where does one go, I wonder?"

He frowned over the entry in the notebook he carried. "I've copied the next clue but it doesn't seem to make sense." He eyed them suspiciously. "You competing?"

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Oliver. "We're just—looking on."

"Righty-ho . . . *'When lovely woman stoops to folly'* . . . I've an idea I've heard that somewhere."

"It is a well-known quotation," said Poirot.

"A folly can also be a building," said Mrs. Oliver, helpfully. "White—with pillars," she added.

"That's an idea. Thanks a lot. They say Mrs. Ariadne Oliver is down here herself somewhere about. I'd like to get her autograph. You haven't seen her about, have you?"

"No," said Mrs. Oliver firmly.

"I'd like to meet her. Good yarns she writes." He lowered his voice. "But they say she drinks like a fish."

He hurried off and Mrs. Oliver said indignantly: "Really! That's most unfair when I only like lemonade."

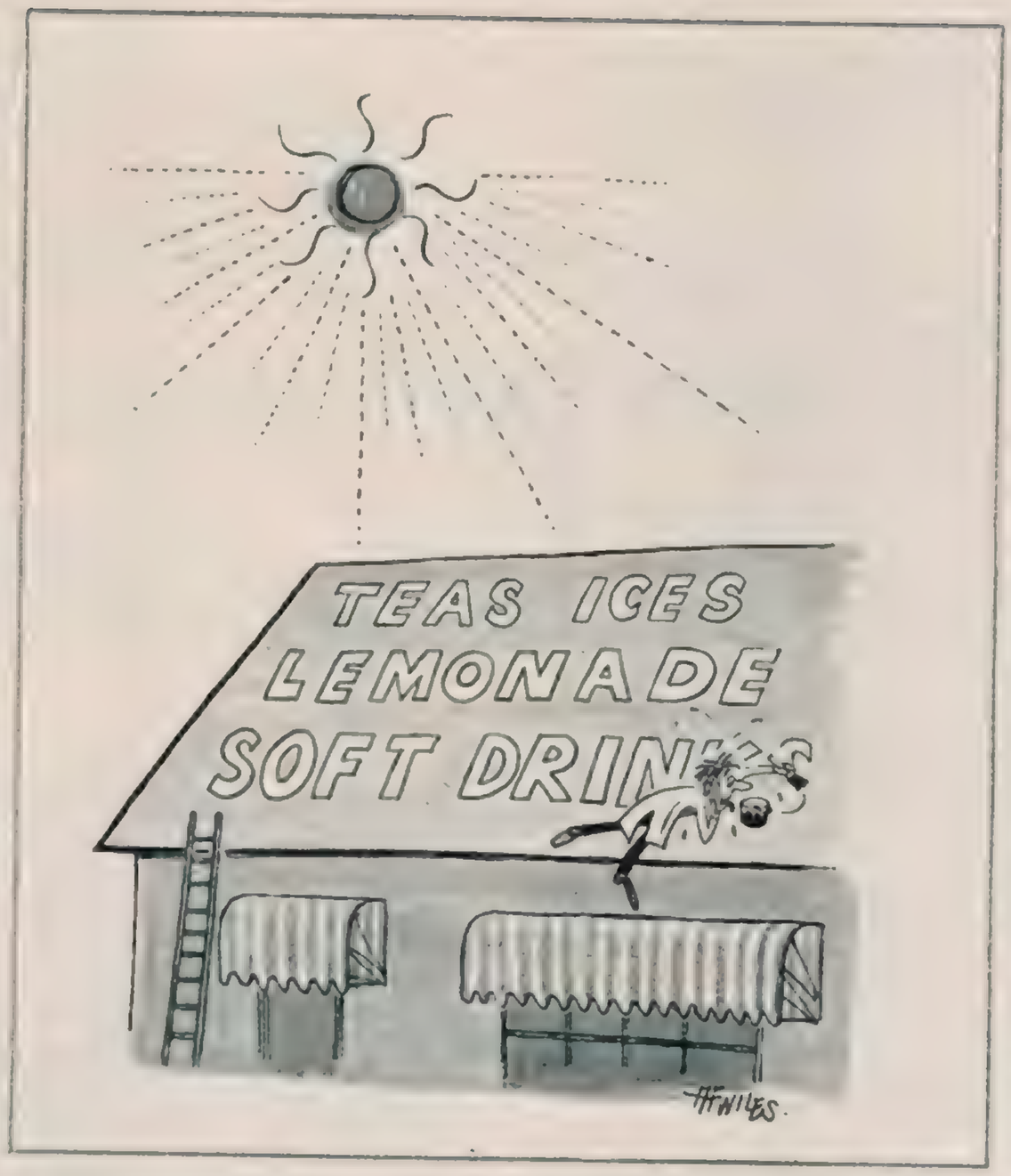
"And have you not just perpetrated the greater unfairness in helping that young man towards the next clue?"

"Considering he's the only one who's got here so far, I thought he ought to be encouraged."

"But you wouldn't give him your autograph."

"That's different," said Mrs. Oliver. "Sh! Here come some more."

But these were not clue hunters. They were two women who, having paid for admittance, were determined



to get their money's worth by seeing the grounds thoroughly.

They were hot and dissatisfied. "You'd think they'd have some nice flower beds," said one to the other. "Nothing but trees and more trees. It's not what I call a garden."

Mrs. Oliver nudged Poirot and they slipped quietly away.

"Supposing," said Mrs. Oliver, distractedly, "that nobody ever finds my body?"

"Patience, madame, and courage," said Poirot. "The afternoon is still young."

"That's true," said Mrs. Oliver brightening. "And it's half-price admission after four thirty, so probably lots of people will flock in. Let's go and see how that Marlene child is getting on.

"I don't really trust that girl, you know. No sense of responsibility. I wouldn't put it past her to sneak away quietly, instead of being a corpse, and go and have tea. You know what people are like about their teas."

They proceeded amicably along the woodland path and Poirot commented on the geography of the property.

"I find it very confusing," he said. "So many paths, and one is never sure where they lead. And trees, trees everywhere."

"You sound like that disgruntled woman we've just left."

They passed the Folly and zig-zagged down to the river. The outlines of the boathouse showed beneath them.

Poirot remarked that it would be awkward if the murder searchers were to light upon the boathouse and find the body by accident.

"A sort of short cut? I thought of that. That's why the last clue is just a key. You can't unlock the door without it. It's a Yale. You can only open it from the inside."

A short, steep slope led down to the door of the boathouse, which was built out over the river, with a little wharf and a storage place for boats underneath. Mrs. Oliver took a key from a pocket concealed among her purple folds and unlocked the door.

"We've just come to cheer you up, Marlene," she said brightly as she entered.

She felt slightly remorseful at her unjust suspicions of Marlene's loyalty, for Marlene, artistically arranged as the Body, was playing her part nobly, sprawled on the floor by the window. Marlene made no response. She lay quite motionless. The wind, blowing gently through the open window, rustled a pile of comics on the table.

"It's all right," said Mrs. Oliver impatiently. "It's only me and Monsieur Poirot. Nobody's got any distance with the clues yet."

Poirot was frowning. Very gently he pushed Mrs. Oliver aside and went and bent over the girl on the floor. A muffled exclamation escaped from his lips. He looked up at Mrs. Oliver.

"So . . . !" he said. "That which you expected has happened."

"You don't mean——" Mrs. Oliver's eyes widened in horror. She grasped for one of the basket chairs and sat down. "You can't mean—she isn't *dead?*"

Poirot nodded. "Yes," he said. "She is dead. Though not long dead."

"But how?"

He lifted the corner of the gay scarf bound round the girl's head, so that Mrs. Oliver could see the clothes line.

"Just like *my* murder," said Mrs. Oliver unsteadily. "But *who?* And *why?*"

"That is the question," said Poirot.

He forbore to add that those had also been her questions. . . .

And that the answers to them could not be her answers, since the victim was not the Yugoslavian first wife of an atom scientist, but Marlene Tucker, a fourteen-year-old village girl who, as far as was known, had not an enemy in the world.

To be continued next week

The wild one

Continued from page 19

with the same giant flicker as a forest fire. Crimson light probed the jungle. It lit the underbelly of the smoke cloud, and reflected from sliced rock. The train travelled like a dragon.

Of course they saw no animals. Occasionally a dazzled creature will crouch on a road or railway line, staring at the light that is bearing down on it, but there was none now. Not even night-birds crossed the path of the monster. . . .

Until they reached the Patair Doon; and then there on the rails stood the elephant. He had recovered from his wounds and had returned to battle

The line at this point is straight, and banked. He must have climbed up on to it from the forest alongside, and he stood like a fortress waiting for the enemy.

He looked gigantic. The moon and the flare of light from the train were upon him together.

Great flags of black and gold light waved over him; over royal tusks and broad forehead which housed a brain and intelligence almost next to man's and in which the scars of bullet wounds were freshly healed.

Tamed, this noble animal would have performed anything for a mahout he loved, and asked only a word of praise in return. At the hands of those he trusted, he would have endured severe surgery with groans and tears but no retaliation. He would have played the buffoon to get a laugh, or turned the tables on someone for a joke.

But he was not tamed.

As the train rumbled into sight, most animals would have bolted. Not this one—he was waiting for it. His whole body started, his ears lay back, and he uttered a preliminary shriek.

The train whistled, the elephant trumpeted and came lumbering down the rails towards it. In the glaring light and flame and smoke and flying sparks, the two charged each other; the elephant silently now, because his trunk was tucked up under his chin to preserve it from damage.

When the engine-driver saw what was going to happen, he put on all his brakes. White steam whistled into the smoke, metal screamed. Train and elephant met with a collision that thundered among the hills.

The jungle and the machine crashed head-on in a grinding smash to which there could be but one end. The cow-catcher lifted the animal and scraped his mangled body along before train and elephant both left the rails and headed down the bank, where they started to overturn, and rolled together with a terrible noise of metal to the bottom of the slope.

There they all piled up, while the smash and the echoes died out, and human voices could be heard instead. Those who were not injured—Edward and Dolly among them—extricated themselves and rushed to the aid of others.

The engine lay burning and hissing, lighting up the snarled carriages and the body of the elephant, trickled over with dark red blood.

Dolly's blue shantung coat was in ribbons. She began to tear it up for bandages. Already you could smell iodine; and, in default of anything better, they were giving people soda-water to drink.

A few hours later men arrived from Runital to see why the train hadn't appeared, and so help came, and those who needed it were moved to hospital. There were no serious casualties, except for the elephant.

After the injured had all been moved, and while Edward and Dolly were waiting for transport, they went back to look at him. All Dolly's new clothes were ruined, and her hair had fallen down, and she was wearing Edward's coat—a girl fresh out from England, with English roses still in her cheeks, and her honeymoon train derailed by an elephant. She had never looked more beautiful in all her life.

She slipped her hand into his—there were lots of people about—and she whispered: "He tried to stop us coming into his jungle. And I wanted him to win. Without hurting anybody, of course. I wish . . . I *wish* he could have won."

You might think that was the end of the story, but it isn't. The Runi line recovered from these setbacks, and carried freight and passengers to and from the hills for nearly half a century. But there were other troubles, such as earthquakes and a landslide—and one day dacoits ambushed the train—and the idea took hold locally that the line had been unlucky from that very first day. Some unseen thing had laid a curse upon it. In consequence it was not much used.

Recently, air traffic has been replacing rail. Because it had so long been uneconomic, the Runi branch line was finally closed. Last time I saw it, there were saplings growing between the rails, which it had not been thought worth while to lift.

I saw a small herd of spotted deer cross from one side to the other. They took no notice of the plane which could be heard high overhead. As a matter of fact, last year the Runi block was scheduled for a nature reserve. Three hundred square miles of jungle.

It makes you realize that though man must always triumph over the forest, as he did with this railway, he has only to step back a moment, and nature obliterates his work.

So perhaps Dolly's wish did come true in the end; because what people are saying now is that the elephant did not die in vain, and that it was he who won the Runi block for the jungle.

THE END

FOOLS—4

Suffer fools gladly; they may be right.

Holbrook Jackson

LEAVES FROM

Starke's

HOLIDAY
GUIDE BOOK

"This attractive and secluded island may easily be reached on foot when the tide is out"

My Himalayan parish

Continued from page 11

two halves. Each takes half the stone back to his chief. When the caravans arrive at the trading centre, the chief trader will not dispose of one grain of barley or rice until he meets the man who has the matching half of the stone.

Reluctantly we left the lakes and the green hills and climbed up to the end of the valley. I took a final look round, at the rolling tableland of Tibet, and, in the other direction, at the great Nanda Devi, thrusting 25,000 feet into the sky. Then we dropped into another walled valley, and simultaneously into trouble.

Soon I was lost. I could find no sign of the trail. For four hours we scrambled over landslides, snow bridges and near precipices. At times we were three hundred feet up the cliff face on a tiny ledge, then, a few minutes later, sliding down loose shale to wade the icy waters of a stream.

At the end of the four hours we had covered only two miles. I edged over into a rocky chimney and hung on to my implanted ice-axe while I felt for a foothold. I found none. I looked down and saw stones I had dislodged falling a hundred feet to the valley floor. I hauled myself back on to a ledge, and waved the party to a stop. We were at the end of the trail.

Only Smiler was unworried. He grabbed the yaks and led them down into the gorge. Jac and I waited to get a good laugh at him when he tried to move along the sheer wall on the opposite side; but the laugh lay with Smiler. As if they were flies with suckered feet, he and the yaks moved across the perpendicular wall. We could see nothing of what they walked on. When they reached a fault, which I was sure would halt them, Smiler grinned at us and turned back on his trail down a sloping layer of rock.

With no trouble, he led the yaks far below us, with the open valley before him and the grazing land only half a mile ahead. Feeling small, we followed

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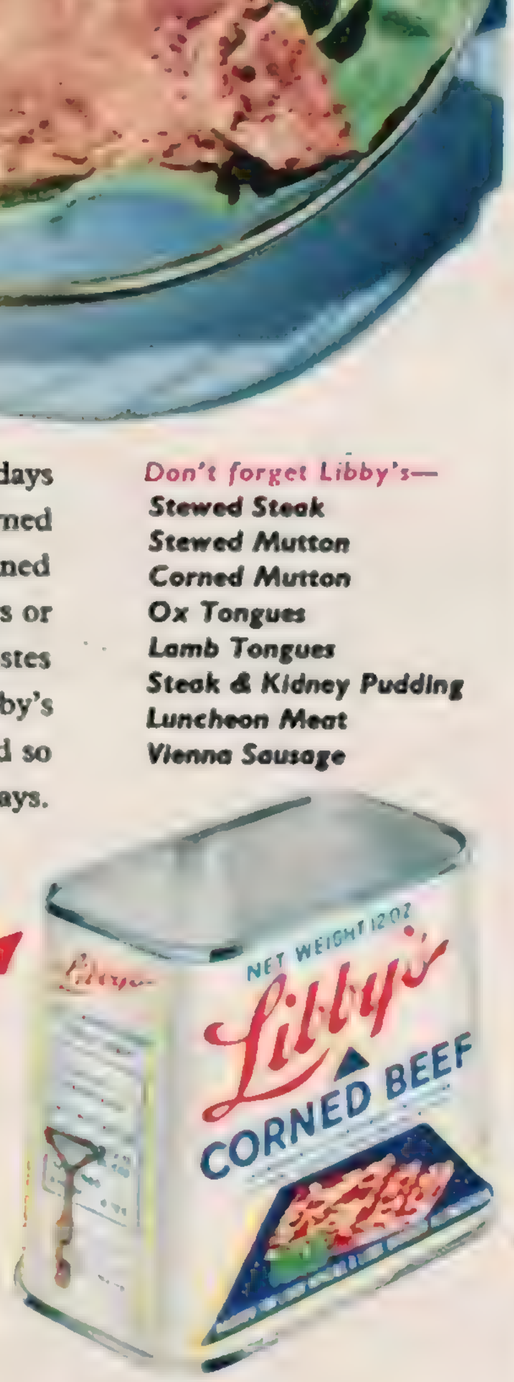

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him along the narrow, but now distinct trail.

The following day we found the well-beaten track we had sought for nearly forty-eight hours. Skeletons of the men we had been a week ago, we dropped into the Niti Valley.

Deserted in winter, all these high valleys are inhabited in summer by the Bhotya people. I found them charming and friendly folk to live among. They are nomadic traders, moving up to the Tibetan border in the summer, living lower down the valley in the autumn, and travelling the plains and foothills in winter buying goods for the next trading season. The men wear tight homespun trousers and usually have a blanket pinned over their shoulders. The women wear colourful, baggy clothing, with many ornaments. The most striking of the ornaments is a gold ring they wear in the nose, which is pierced for the purpose.

Whether he is clambering along the mountains with his pack sheep or lounging and drinking with his friends, the Bhotya man is for ever spinning wool. He holds a bundle of raw wool under one arm and pulls it out with his fingers into a rough strand. The strand he fixes to a notch on the top of a bobbin which has at the other end a wooden weight. He gives the bobbin a sharp spin, and it falls towards his feet, tightly twisting the wool that it hangs from. The man winds the spun wool round the spindle, then repeats the process. He gives the spun wool to his wife, and she weaves blankets, clothing and carpets, colouring the wool with dyes made from mountain flowers and herbs.

THE Bhotya leads a hard, dangerous life. There are dense jungles on the lower Himalayan slopes, where I have known entire villages to migrate to avoid the activities of a man-eating tiger.

A friend of mine, Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Abbott, an experienced hunter, heard one day that a tiger which had already killed two hundred hill folk had struck at a woman as she was cutting grass near her village. He found the woman still alive, though terribly injured in the face and breast.

He gave orders for her to be taken to the nearest government dispensary, fifteen miles away. The woman began to speak, and he bent to hear the feeble voice.

"If you take me away," she said, "you will never catch the tiger. I'm going to die. Leave me here. He will come back for me, and you can shoot him."

Abbott had a hide-out made from bushes. He watched the spot where this brave woman lay for two hours. The sun was setting when the tiger returned and walked slowly to its victim. When it was within two yards of her, Abbott killed it with a heavy bullet behind its shoulder. He ran to the woman, but she had already died.

At Mansiari, on the way up to Milam, a group of women working on land outside the village were attacked by a bear. All the women fled, except one who had no time to get away. She picked up some branches of thorny briar that she had been cutting and pushed the thorns into the bear's face. The bear roared and threw back its head. Swiftly the woman slashed her sickle across the bear's throat, killing it immediately.

Like most wild animals, the Himalayan bear will get out of the way if he knows a human is approaching. Unfortunately, the bear has poor hearing, and, if the wind is wrong, it is easy to walk up and catch a bear unawares. In fear, the bear usually attacks as the only form of defence left to him.

Once I walked round a ridge and found a bear twelve yards away. He was standing on his hind legs, pulling meddler nuts from a tree. I was carrying a double-barrelled combination gun: a twelve bore shotgun in the left barrel and a 500 Express rifle in the right barrel. The noise of the branches prevented the bear's hearing us until the Indians with me shouted. Immediately he spun round, dropped on all fours and came at me, moving like an express train. I quickly pointed the rifle—there was no time to find the sights—at the white V on his chest, and put the heavy plug from the right barrel into him. He still came on, so I fired the shotgun barrel at him. He dropped almost at my feet.

"Any idea when they'll be back?"

In addition to the dangers from animals, the Bhotya has also to face the danger of avalanches or accidents on the mountains. For this reason, whenever a caravan left Milam it was escorted out of the village by dancers and singing girls. The dances and songs depict the dangers ahead, and forecast a happy return: all with the aim of emboldening the travellers.

I was moving nearer to Tibet from Milam in June, 1954, and as usual the dancing began outside my house. With my three yaks and their drovers, I had to stop every hundred yards while the girls sang and the male sword dancers flung themselves around.

As we came clear of the village, and I was ready to leave the entertainers and start the journey in earnest, the blade flew from the hilt of one dancer's sword and came down point foremost into the neck of a young man in the watching crowd. I had to stop and spend half an hour putting in stitches. I handed the man bandages and disinfectant and told him how to use them. Five months later I saw him again, completely cured.

Wherever I go in the Himalayas, my medical kit brings me a warm welcome. Wherever there is a mission house, the Bhotyas know there will be a dispensary there. Our main dispensary, at Mansiari, treated an average of 2,500 patients a month.

Before I left my home in Chiswick to work on the Tibetan border I took an intensive one-year medical course. When I arrived at Mansiari—the first missionary there for twenty-four years—my medical work became the key to my missionary activities. The dispensary brought the people in and I got their confidence. I gave no sermons; the message that was in my head simply came out in conversation. Today I am in charge of twenty-five missionaries stationed in the Himalayas. Each mission station has its dispensary.

I have done more than fifty operations for cataract. I usually performed operations on a stone wall outside the dispensary, always in the morning when the sun shone brightly and the afternoon wind had not yet risen. The insides of the buildings were never light enough, or clean enough, to do an operation there.

Luckily the Bhotyas are stoical, ready to suffer discomfort from an operation when they believe they can be cured. One woman, whose toe was almost severed by a falling rock, dragged herself for two days through the mountains to reach the dispensary. I laid her on the wide top of the garden wall, got a bucket of hot water and disinfectant, then anaesthetized her with a chloroform mask. She came round six times while I was taking off her toe, and each time I had to run to the other end to chloroform her again.

FOOLS—5

Let us be thankful for the fools; but for them the rest of us could not succeed.

Mark Twain

When I first arrive at a village, I often find a crowd of sick and injured people waiting for me. Though tired from the journey, I sail into them, and sometimes my treatment is summary. I remember one man who seemed very distressed, explaining symptoms by touching various parts of his body and grimacing. I diagnosed malaria, sterilized and filled a syringe, and plunged the needle into his arm. He looked shocked.

"No, Sahib, I'm not ill," he said, "It's my wife." He expected to be given pills or medicines to take away.

Sometimes it is the practitioner who has to be stoical. When Andrew Laing and I were trekking in late 1947, three hillmen approached our camp on a ridge above a river. They asked us to visit an urgent medical case on the other side of the river.

The river was in spate. No boat or raft could cross it. We were left with a method of crossing at which these hillmen were expert—but which to me was terrifying.

We divided into two parties. I stripped to my underpants, and two men tied my dry clothing and my medical kit on their heads. Around their upper bodies they tied large gourds, dried and hollow, things about the size of pumpkins. They entered the water a quarter of a mile upstream from the spot where they intended to reach the other side.

I watched as they were swirled away in the torrent, kept afloat by their gourd water wings. When they were swept near a rock they lay still until they were safely past, then, in open water, they kicked their way gradually towards the opposite bank. Finally they reached what they were aiming at—a back eddy—and they scrambled ashore.

Now it was my turn. A strapping hillman gave me two gourds, then tied ten on himself. I thought I had the sticky end of the deal; then I realized I was going over by a kind of taxi service.

We waded in, I held the rope which tied his gourds to his chest. As soon as the water was above knee deep it swept us off our feet. I clung to his rope and kicked the breast stroke kick as he had instructed me. I have a confused memory of the next few minutes. I saw spray and waves, and this body bobbing in front of me. It seemed an hour before we were wallowing in the calm water of the back eddy, safe on the other side.

BY 1948 I had established three forward stations in the valleys on the Tibetan trade routes. Each was staffed with missionaries. As Tibet itself was forbidden to Europeans, our only hope was to get the traders to carry Christian propaganda back to their own countries. We had two plans in operation, one aimed at the Buddhist monks, or lamas, who are the only Tibetans who can read, and the other aimed at the ordinary people.

At Milam, with Marlin Summers, an American missionary, I established a Tibetan Inn. This is a stone shelter with a corral for animals. There we provided free refreshments: Tibetan tea and *tsampa*, barley flour which they mixed with the tea to make dough pellets.

While the traders thawed themselves by the fire, we produced a gramophone and played over a record of part of the Christian message spoken in Tibetan. We had to play it twice, invariably—once for them to get over the shock of something they had never met before, and once for them to hear what the record said.

When they left, I handed the leader of each group a simple gramophone made specially as an aid to missionaries. These gramophones have no works. They are driven by a crank handle.

I heard of one of those gramophones that had found a home in the village post office at Gyangtse, near Lhasa. Every visitor to the post office insisted on having this marvel demonstrated. For hours each day the people of Gyangtse imbibed the teachings of the Gospels.

Perhaps of more lasting value was our "Bible-running" campaign, aimed at the thousands of lamaseries, or Tibetan monasteries.

The lamas generally have a love of learning, and are tolerant towards new ideas. In 1948, one of them, Lama Gergin, though never converted to Christianity himself, agreed to translate the Bible into Tibetan under the direction of the Moravian Missionaries. He lived at Leh, in Kashmir, close to the Tibetan border, and he had almost completed his gigantic task when fighting between India and Pakistan cut communications with Leh.

Chandu Ray, of the Bible Society, went to the fighting line, and in some way got an agreement to cross no-man's-land and escort Lama Gergin back.

They flew him to Lahore—from twelve thousand feet above sea level to 120 degrees in the sun. He was an old man. At Bible Society headquarters the officials took him into the

basement and packed huge cubes of ice around the walls; there, in comfort, he finished his hand-written translation.

As there is no printer's type-face of Tibetan characters, Lama Gergin's pages were reproduced in photostatic editions. As a result, the complete volume weighed five pounds, measured fourteen inches by nine inches and was six inches thick. These dimensions added to our difficulties.

The "Bible-running" was usually done by a trader, Dyan Singh, who had embraced Christianity. We found that we could get only twenty Bibles in each yak load; and as one man could handle no more than three yaks, our annual export of Bibles was limited to sixty copies.

All the lamaseries in Western Tibet sent representatives to the trading grounds at Gyanima. When he arrived there, Dyan Singh stacked the Bibles in his tent and went out to seek men with shorn heads who wore saffron robes. Singh knew that these were signs that such men were lamas who held responsible positions in their lamaseries.

He invited each lama into his tent, gave him tea and presented him with a Bible.

In this way we ran Bibles into Tibetan monasteries for five years, and at the end of that time we had sent a Bible into almost every lamaserie in Western Tibet.

I am sure that they will be cherished, as all writing is considered sacred by Tibetans.

For the same reason I had no qualms when I heard, in 1953, that a few hours after I had watched the caravan move off over the border a band of robbers had chased away the traders and captured their goods—among them our consignment of sixty Bibles. Later one load was found and returned to us. But I know that even Tibetan bandits would not destroy written matter. Sooner or later the stolen Bibles will reach somebody who can read them.

In 1954 we had the three yak-loads of Bibles waiting for the Sarji to give the green light for trade to begin. He gave the word, and the caravans began to move off. From the Indian Government post, a police officer came to my Australian colleague, Dudley Barker, and told him that the Bibles could not go.

"They come under the heading of propaganda," he said. "On no account must you send them into Tibet."

Barker understood him. The Chinese Communists now had control of Tibet, and the Indian Government was anxious not to cause any rift in diplomatic relations.

Three weeks went by. We were in despair. It was already dark, and the last caravan was to leave early the next morning.

Then, quite casually, the same police officer hailed Barker and said, "By the way, those Bibles of yours have been released. You may send them if you wish."

Barker rushed into the village, praying that the caravan was not completely committed for its loads. Dyan Singh had already left. Barker found a trader who took the Bibles over the border for the standard rate per day charged for carrying.

THEY were the last Bibles to go into Tibet. On my return from Milam to the Mission House at Lohaghat, I placed an order for the 1955 consignment from Calcutta, only to be told that the supply had been used up, and that new editions, less bulky than before, would be a year or two in preparation.

Since then the area within fifty miles of the Tibetan border, including all our forward stations, has been closed to Europeans by the Government of India. When more Bibles are available, it looks as though I shall have to work out new methods of getting them over the frontier.

In one way, there is much to encourage the missionary in the work of the Communists in Tibet. There are four languages in Tibet. There are two aristocratic languages, one spoken and one written. And there are spoken and written colloquial languages. There is no connection between the written and spoken languages in either group.

The Communists were not going to have any truck with four languages; and they have begun finding a way of writing down the spoken colloquial, creating a *lingua franca* that will soon be written and spoken by all Tibetans.

Missionaries get regular deliveries of publications by the Communists in Tibet. They are rapidly learning the new language, and soon traders will be taking back thousands of pamphlets couched in this new tongue.

To spread their propaganda, the Chinese Communists have introduced radios into Tibet. When we discovered that hundreds of sets were going from Indian radio dealers into Lhasa, we realized that we could put Christian teachings through those radios as easily as the Communists could put through their propaganda, which is beamed at Lhasa for only four hours a day.

In Manila, in the Philippines, American religious groups run a radio station that puts out religious broadcasts for twenty-two hours a day to all the countries of Asia. Recently we have been busy writing material which is recorded by sympathetic Tibetans in their own tongue The recordings are beamed direct into Lhasa every other night. THE END

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER

The unwise lover of an unwise queen fell asleep in the garden of Falkland Palace

YOUNG Alexander Ruthven dared to fall in love with the Queen of Scotland. Her husband, James VI, had given her a special ribbon as a token. She unwisely passed it on to her lover who, one hot summer afternoon, fell asleep in the garden of Falkland Palace wearing the ribbon.

The King passed by, noticed the ribbon and went in search of the Queen. One of her ladies saw what had happened and guessed what the consequences could be. She snatched the ribbon from the sleeper and ran with it to the Queen.

A moment later the King arrived and angrily asked the Queen where his ribbon was. She calmly walked to a drawer and produced it. The King seemed very perplexed and retired, muttering to himself.

Falkland Palace, originally a royal hunting-box, became the favourite retreat of the Stuart kings and queens. But it was also the scene of much misery and cruelty. In 1402, Prince Robert, for many years Regent of Scotland, arrested his nephew, David, Duke of Rothesay, heir to the throne, and imprisoned him in a tower of the Palace.

At the time a comet with a streaming tail appeared in the sky. Rothesay declared that such comets foretold the death of princes. By Easter the comet had disappeared, and the young heir mysteriously died.

James V rebuilt large parts of the Palace, which is now in the safe keeping of the National Trust for Scotland.

The South Range facing Falkland High Street is the finest work of its period in Scotland. It consists of the gatehouse, with two noble round towers and dunce-cap steeples, and the Chapel Royal. On the five chapel buttresses stand the famous holy statues, representing Our Lord with the family of Zebedee.

James's architect was Sir James Hamilton, a man of exceptional ability, but wild and irresponsible. He was known as the "Bastard of Arran" and was the King's boon companion. In 1540 he was arrested on a trumped-up charge of having plotted against his master, and was promptly executed. Whereupon the King bitterly regretted his death.

James V died of melancholy at Falkland. A week before his death he was told that a daughter had been born to him. "The De'il gang wi' it. It will end as it began. It cam wi' a lass, and will gang wi' a lass," he replied, referring to the throne of his ancestors.

That child became Mary Queen of Scots, who was to be executed by Elizabeth I.

How to get there: Falkland is thirty-six miles north of Edinburgh. *Open:* The Palace: April to September, weekdays, October to March, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 till 5. Garden: June to September, weekdays.

Sold as slaves—in 1956

Continued from page 15

intended to take to Saudi Arabia to sell. The trader was tried, convicted and sentenced to ten years' imprisonment.

Slaves in Saudi Arabia often suffer great cruelty. Some months ago, a tall, slim Englishman, burned a deep brown by exposure to the heat of the desert, walked into my office in a state of controlled indignation. He came to tell me what he had seen of slavery in Saudi Arabia, where he had been working with an international locust control mission.

As he talked, I could see that his anger had been aroused, not so much by the fact that people are living in slavery in the middle of the twentieth century, but more by the cruelty inflicted upon them.

"I met many highly placed Arabs who had slaves in their households," he told me. "They made no secret of it. In fact, they were proud of it, because their social standing depended on the number of their slaves, very much as an Englishman's might depend on the size of his house. In a way, it was this acceptance of slavery as part of the natural order of things which horrified me most. That, and the cruelty.

"I've seen slaves who had been branded on the thighs or arms with a hot iron, as cattle are branded in other countries to indicate who owns them; and slaves who had an ear or a toe cut off, because they had been suspected of stealing or some other crime. They never lose a hand or a finger, because that would make them less capable of working, but that's about the only consideration that checks the mutilation of slaves.

"Worst of all is the fate of those who try to escape and are recaptured. Some are beheaded, some are literally beaten to death."

NO figures exist to show how many slaves there are in Arabia, but my estimate is that there are half a million. Thousands are used in the pearl-diving industry on the north coast of Oman, diving in seas infested with man-eating fish.

But by far the greater number are in Saudi Arabia.

The government there claims that it has laws prohibiting slave trading, and that they are enforced, but the truth is that the decree, made by the late King Ibn Saud twenty years ago, only prohibits the importation of slaves by sea and the selling of free persons into slavery.

It does not prohibit slave-trading. On the contrary, it authorizes the traffic of slaves by traders who are licensed by the Ministry of Interior. Most slaves in Saudi Arabia have been born in slavery and the buying and selling of them is legal. And while the slave markets exist the traffic in free men and girls, enticed from Africa and elsewhere, is too easy and too profitable to be stamped out easily.

But now the United Nations is taking action. It has drafted a new "Slavery Convention" which is being discussed at a conference in Geneva this month. Nearly every country in the world has been invited to send to the conference a representative to sign the convention on behalf of his government. The convention, which aims at the complete abolition of slavery, is expected to come into force before the end of the year.

Not even white people are wholly safe from being kidnapped and made slaves.

I heard some time ago of a Frenchwoman from Nice who was seized while on a journey in Syria and sold into slavery in Arabia.

Even more amazing, I was told by a diplomat who had worked in Saudi Arabia that in about 1951 a British ship was wrecked in the Red Sea and two sailors who had survived reached the shore of Saudi Arabia. They were seized, taken to a slave market and sold.

By good fortune, officials at the British Embassy heard about the sale and secured their release. THE END

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For ten winners of £2 10s., see *"Bullets" Bulletin*. 50 Special Awards and 1,500 "Good Shot" Prizes have also been posted.

(Tournament winner will be announced in JOHN BULL next week.)

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated September 22), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, September 8, for early news of No. 2,053 result.)

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 2,053, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.).

To Everyone over Forty:

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A probable cause of decline in healthful vigour among people over forty years of age is reduction of body-tissue function through prolonged over-use, with insufficient rest and inadequate nutrition of tissue cells. The tension and stress of life today play a part in this process of deterioration, and a restoration of digestive and metabolic tone becomes vitally necessary. That is why everyone over forty—men or women—should take Phyllosan tablets to increase resistance to stress, and at the same time to promote vigour and health—thus leading to the enjoyment of the later years of life.

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You may win at pools by using a pin. But sensible punters know that most profit comes from a careful evaluation of the form of the various teams, plus intelligent use of "systems." It is this punter primarily for whom the DAILY HERALD caters.

Every week Chris Bale, one of the greatest of pools specialists, previews in detail the coming Saturday's matches and gives the systems that show most promise. The HERALD's team of soccer experts keeps you fully informed on developments and gives best reports on matches. Thus, the man who reads the HERALD every day can claim to know soccer inside out. To acquire such knowledge is the sensible way to set about winning on the pools.

SPECIAL NOTE. A two-page pools supplement will be published in the DAILY HERALD on Wednesday, August 22

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